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including King Ludwig II, Nietzsche, Nina, Cosima and Siegfried Wagner and 167 letters by the composer himself, with autograph letters and manuscripts by Beethoven, Berlioz, Brahms, Britten, von Bülow, Casals (oil portrait), Gounod, Grieg, Humperdinck, Liszt, Mendelssohn, Ravel, Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams, Verdi (24 autograph letters), Alexander I, Alexander III, Andersen, Blücher, Bonaparte, Chopin, Corneille, Daudet, Eluard, Ferdinand II, Ferdinand III, Frederick William II, Frederick William III, Garibaldi, Gluck, Goethe, Grottel, Herwegh, Hesse, Müller, Hugo, Josephine, Kuprin, Lenin, Linnaeus, Mallarmé, Mann, Marconi, Marie Antoinette, Marie Louise, Marie de Médicis, Murat, Mussolini, Nicholas I, Eva Perón, Peter the Great, Pissarro, Archduke Rudolf, de Sade, Saint-John Perse, Trotsky, Tuwene, Valéry, Vigny, and a highly important letter by Vincent van Gogh.

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Edited by GYORGY LITVAN and JANOS M. BAK

Szabo (1877-1918) was one of the theoretical leaders of a whole generation of progressive thinkers from Oscar Reiss through Karl and Michael Polanyi to Georg Lukacs and many others. Noise and an introduction help to place the writings in their historical and political context.
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in the Twentieth Century

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The perils of deterrence

By Michael Howard

LAWRENCE FREEDMAN:
The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy
433pp. Macmillan. £25.
0 333 25619 0

LAURENCE MARTIN:
The Two-Edged Sword
Armed Force in the Modern World
The Reith Lectures 1981
108pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£5.95.
0 297 78139 1

SOLLY ZUCKERMAN:
Nuclear Illusion and Reality
156pp. Collins. £7.50 (paperback
£4.95).
0 00 21655 5

MARY KALDROR:
The Baroque Arsenal
294pp. André Deutsch. £7.95.
0 233 97388 5

JEFF MCMAHAN:
British Nuclear Weapons
For and Against
165pp. Junction Books. £9.95 (paper-
back, £3.95).
0 88245 047 0

The danger of nuclear war is probably greater now than at any previous time. The accelerating arms race, together with changes in the international scene, continue to "destabilize" the equilibrium between the major nuclear powers. Although the change may not have been very widely noticed, nuclear planning has moved dangerously away from the straightforward deterrent conception, which obtained for many years, of "mutual assured destruction", towards policies based on the expectation of fighting a nuclear war and, supposedly, winning it.

The interesting thing about the above three statements, the first inherently unprovable, the second a controversial half-truth, and the third simply false, is that they have not been made by some itinerant CND hedge-preacher, but by one of our most eminent philosophers, Professor Bernard Williams, now Provost of King's College, Cambridge. They appear in his preface to Jeff McMahan's study, *British Nuclear Weapons: For and Against*. They are,

however, very typical of pronouncements being made throughout the Western world by alarmed laymen who are beginning to discover some of the facts of life in the nuclear age and, inevitably, getting a lot of them wrong.

Those of us who have been trying to monitor these developments over the past twenty-five years have no doubt become biased and insensitive and need waking up at regular intervals. But it is not self-evident, for example, that the danger of nuclear war is any greater now than it was at the time of the Cuba Missile Crisis twenty years ago; or that the arms race is "accelerating" beyond the rate which was normal in, say, the 1950s and 60s; or that a situation in which the Soviet Union had acquired a lead over the United States in every branch of weaponry, nuclear and conventional, as they had by the end of the 1970s, was one of stable equilibrium; or that the concept of deterrence by "mutual assured destruction" really did prevail for very long, or indeed that it was ever quite so "straightforward" as the Provost of King's suggests; or, finally, that there is anything very new about policies "based on the expectation of fighting a nuclear war". Such policies were made explicit by Robert McNamara in a series of much-quoted statements exactly twenty years ago, and have been implicit in American strategic planning since the early 1950s. Nor is there any cause to suppose from the great mass of available evidence that the Soviet Union has ever had any different expectation. Ever since nuclear weapons were developed their possessors have had plans for their use. The idea that we have only recently been driven out of an Eden of nuclear stability by American hawks anxious to fight a nuclear war, preferably in Europe, is not one that stands up to critical examination.

But something has certainly changed; and that is the world balance of military power. The extent of that change is a matter of controversy, American hawks overrating it as grotesquely as it has been underrated by European doves. But the basic reality is undeniable. Whether or not the Soviet Union has achieved "strategic superiority", the United States has lost it. Even if the figures, notoriously unreliable as

they are, did not bear this out, the Americans believe they have lost it and go round telling everyone that they have done so; and people who believe themselves to be inferior must expect to be regarded as such.

This is something new. We have been told before that the United States was in danger of losing its strategic superiority, notably at the time of the Sputnik and the notorious "missile gap" in 1957-62. Now we are informed that it has actually happened. And now that it has happened, we can see that such "stability" as we believed we enjoyed in the three decades after the Second World War was based, not on any presumption of "mutual assured destruction", but on one of such overwhelming American nuclear supremacy that any first use of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union could effectively be discounted; whereas a threat of first use by the West to counter a Soviet conventional attack appeared quite convincing.

Under such circumstances the American "nuclear guarantee" to Western Europe - the promise that the United States would help to defend its NATO allies even at the risk of suffering the effects of nuclear war on its own territory - seemed altogether credible, and the deployment, and threatened first use, of "theatre nuclear weapons" was an acceptable and necessary part of the strategy of deterrence. But with the Soviet achievement of parity at every level - "strategic" missiles of intercontinental range, "theatre" nuclear weapons that can fire into Europe from outside, "tactical" nuclear weapons for use on the battlefield, to say nothing of conventional forces - the threat of "first use" by the West at any level now appears suicidal, and renewed doubt has been cast on the effectiveness of the whole mechanism of nuclear deterrence as it has developed over the past thirty years.

These doubts do not mean that "the danger of war is probably greater now than at any previous times"; unless one believes, with the Committee on the Present Danger in the United States, that the Soviet Union perceives "a window of opportunity" which it proposes to exploit in order to achieve its ambitions of world

conquest. Yet those who are most vociferous in warning us against the imminent danger of war see that danger as coming, not from Soviet adventurism, but from a United States that is at present loudly bewailing its strategic inferiority. Mr McMahan is, unfortunately, not untypical when he writes in his book about America's "serious... intention to use Europe as the battlefield for its war with the Soviet Union"; but if we are to take American alarmists' assessments of Soviet strength at all seriously, the United States is in no position to contemplate war with the Soviet Union, in Europe or anywhere else, and will not be for many years to come.

The commonsensical reaction to these developments is to declare the whole situation ludicrously exaggerated and to deny, as Henry Kissinger did when he still occupied a position of responsibility and power, that "strategic superiority" in an age of nuclear plenty can mean anything at all; to accept that the consequences of nuclear war, on however small a scale, are so dreadful that no nation, however powerful and ruthless, will ever risk initiating it so long as there is a finite possibility of suffering directly from its consequences. If everyone took this robust attitude there would be little to worry about.

Unfortunately there are a very large number of people who, like Bernard Williams, do not. Their views extend over a spectrum, beyond one end of which we find a desire to re-create the American strategic superiority of the 1950s, and beyond the other the hope of building a new world order in which all nations will happily live together in a state of military nakedness and the young child will play in the cockatrice's den. Within the spectrum of more realistic possibilities, opinions range from those who, by developing options of "limited use", hope to make nuclear deterrence credible by avoiding the inevitability of the holocaust that at present makes it incredible; through those who seek to make the use of nuclear weapons unnecessary by improving conventional or unconventional defences; to those members of the European Peace Movement who are prepared to acquiesce in Soviet strategic superiority and dismantle any weapons-systems

on their soil that the Soviet Union might regard as "provocative". The latter bear eloquent if unwitting witness to the political dividends that the development of nuclear superiority brings in its wake.

It would save a great deal of trouble if everyone who wished to inform themselves about this debate, let alone take part in it, were to read Lawrence Freedman's magisterial yet lively study on *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, if only to remind themselves how often we have been round this particular track before. Disdaining in which these issues are increasingly discussed, Professor Freedman reminds us of much that is too easily forgotten. Originally it was believed that nuclear weapons could maintain an American *imperium* almost indefinitely. Even after the Soviet Union had revealed the naivety of this assumption by exploding both nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, expectations of continuing nuclear superiority were used to justify the economical strategy of "massive retaliation", until the Sputnik scare in 1957 triggered off the panicky over-reaction that so closely parallels that of our own time.

In the early 1960s the acceptance of strategic parity, and with it of mutual nuclear deterrence, set on foot the search for practicable means of using military force, whether offensively or defensively, in "limited wars"; and there was at least as much discussion of "limited nuclear options" between 1958 and 1964 as there has been more recently. Mr McNamara brought to the Department of Defence a whole quiverful of options, nuclear and conventional, most of them forged by Rand Corporation. America's European allies found most of them militarily unpalatable, or politically unacceptable, and their resistance, combined with the increasing United States involvement in Vietnam, made McNamara's "flexible response" concept of "mutually assured destruction" which the development of stable second-strike delivery systems appeared to make possible.

In fact that concept masked a massive and increasing American nuclear superiority, largely deriving from the

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development of MIRVs, which postponed, if it did not entirely prevent, the asking of disagreeable questions as to what would happen if deterrence failed. Freedman quotes one particularly trenchant critique:

Although commonly called a "strategy," assured destruction was by itself the antithesis of a strategy. Unlike any strategy that ever preceded it throughout the history of armed conflict, it ceased to be useful precisely where military strategy is supposed to come into effect: at the edge of war.

Serious criticism of the doctrine was also postponed by the priority inevitably given to the real war which the United States was fighting in Vietnam from 1964 to 1974. But as soon as that was over, a new Secretary for Defence, James Schlesinger, began once again to discuss a "strategy of options" that would, as he and others at the time put it, present the President, in the event of Soviet aggression, with "alternatives to genocide". In fact, as critics within the Administration have since pointed out, the American targeting system had always contained plenty of such alternatives, and the picture painted by critics of MAD as an utterly immoral strategy involving the destruction of cities as the sole available response to any hostile military move was libellously untrue. But the problem remained and still remains: what do you do if deterrence does fail? What kind of response is appropriate to an enemy attack, whether conventional or nuclear? And if the enemy were to launch a pre-emptive first strike, how do you ensure the survival not only of your retaliatory forces, but of the command and control apparatus that could ensure their use for anything short of genocide?

Freedman describes, both lucidly and comprehensively, the process by which we reached our present predicament. While justly criticizing most of the thinkers with whom he deals for taking the political framework of strategy for granted and becoming "infatuated with the microscopic analysis of military technology and the acquisition of equipment by the forces on both sides", he concludes that in spite of all the absurdities of the analysts, nuclear deterrence works. It is, he suggests, "a viable policy, even if it is not credible.... The Emperor's Deterrence may have no clothes, but he is still Emperor." Lawrence Martin, in his *Rediff Lectures*, came to the same conclusion and cited another popular image to express it: "if you know of a better 'ole, go to it!"

Professor Martin's exposition of the problems of nuclear deterrence, under the title *The Two-Edged Sword*, was rather too lucid for some tastes. He covered far more ground than he was able to explore in depth, and trailed his coat with a tendentious denial that any such thing as an arms race existed, and with a hurried, not very convincing defence of the British independent deterrent. His critique of the concept of "Mutually Assured Destruction" also contained some unguarded statements. He complained that if it were really implemented "nuclear forces would become good only for neutralizing other nuclear forces". Many of us believe that this is all they are good for, and any attempt to provide them with further political utility would need to be very carefully argued indeed.

But Martin did set out fairly the problem of nuclear deterrence as we have considered it above. It would, he said,

be irresponsible not to have plans for trying to limit the damage once nuclear weapons are used. So long as deterrence exists, there is no denying it may fail.... Like all nuclear deterrence strategies, the idea of limited nuclear options is intended not to fight war but to deter aggression and thereby avoid war.... [They provide] a few added stopping places.... on the dreadful escalatory slope.

Martin admitted that he did "not pretend to any excessive confidence in the idea", and Freedman is still more sceptical. He pointed out, however, that does not carry an enormous risk of generating a more bloody and more costly war, or a more extensive and more prolonged one.

Blows against the political and economic centres of the industrialized world". Lord Zuckerman, in his brief but immensely powerful study *Nuclear Mission and Reality*, is yet more emphatic. As Chief Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence he has observed the failure of all attempts to integrate nuclear weapons into the defence of Western Europe. All studies have shown their destructive power to be inconceivably disproportionate to whatever object they were intended to achieve. An expert on the effect of explosives himself, he spells out what a "limited nuclear option" would mean:

If one could concentrate into one focal point and one focal moment all the destruction which Britain suffered in World War II, the picture would not be as bad as the one that needs to be conjured up when one talks of the explosion of a single megaton warhead over a city.

Besides, since only "utter desperation and fear could lead one side in a conflict to a 'rational' decision to use a nuclear weapon.... if one warhead, who not more than one?"

Lord Zuckerman adheres to the good old view, scorned by Martin, that nuclear weapons are good for nothing except neutralizing other nuclear weapons, and that they "can neither prevent war nor defend in war". "There is no alternative," he concludes, "to our deploying enough properly armed conventional forces to fight, if it ever became necessary, a real war." And the development of such forces, he argues, is inhibited not only by the obsession with usable nuclear weapons but by the ludicrous sophistication of weapons systems that has been making all conventional armament impossibly expensive and almost beyond the capacity of human skills either to manipulate or to maintain. For this he blames the determined ingenuity of technologists in weapons-establishments, who have been driving armament forces and governments to ever more costly and elaborate projects. A memorandum on Research and Development is, in Zuckerman's view, the first essential step to effective arms control.

Mary Kaldor, in *The Baroque Arsenal* focuses on the same phenomenon, but attributes it rather more convincingly to deeper structural causes. She finds these in a combination of the conservatism of the military, who cannot visualize any weapons system other than those they have been brought up to use, and the dynamics of a capitalist system whose effectiveness depends upon continuous innovation. Thus, battleships were developed ever greater size and more formidable armament only to fall victim to the more cost-effective submarine launched torpedo or the bomber aircraft. Bombers in their turn became the object of ever increasing elaboration, long after the advent of missiles that could shoot them out of the sky. Such developments, argues Mary Kaldor, are not only militarily absurd but also economically corrupting, drawing research and development away from the civilian sector and militarizing the economy both of the industrial nations and of the Third World; whose regimes become as a result increasingly corrupt and oppressive, exacting the tolls out of which conflicts, and very probably wars, will arise.

Kaldor uses a very broad brush, and her more sweeping economic conclusions may not stand up to exacting analysis. She never examines in any detail, for example, how the procurement system in this country actually works. She also unconsciously propounds one of two remarkable paradoxes. She complains about the "cozy relationship" of armaments firms with the government, "the idea of the arms companies as national institutions"; but "national institutions" was exactly what an earlier generation of socialists considered that armaments firms ought to be. Neither does she examine some of the more positive implications of these developments for international stability. Are countries armed with those expensive monsters, which can only with difficulty be serviced and cannot be replaced, more likely to go to war with one another than nations armed with cheaper and more plentiful weapons? Is not this competition in producing military disasters, like the three races in kind of submarine

war; expensive and wasteful certainly, but greatly preferable to the real thing? Proliferation of these expensive toys to the Third World has not anywhere produced any great incentive to use them.

Ms Kaldor would probably not agree. Production and possession of the weapons system, she maintains, results in

a series of interlocking and ever-widening vicious circles in which economic instability, conflict, and armament spur each other on to towards some drastic outcome....

The vicious circle of military spending, low growth, and repression may have already propelled the Soviet Union towards a now adventurous, which may have been partly responsible for the invasion of Afghanistan.

Well, so it may. But it may also have been responsible for the congealed immobilism that (pace the Committee on the Present Danger) has been far more characteristic of Soviet military policy over the past five years than any kind of "adventurism". Massive arms expenditure is usually bad and war is even worse, but one cannot conclude in quite so sweeping a fashion that the one necessarily leads to the other.

McMahon in *British Nuclear Weapons: For and Against* is far more rigorous in his approach. He is clearly a trained philosopher, and it is a pleasure to watch him make mincemeat out of a number of sacred cows. He labours, it is true, under some strange misconceptions. One we have already considered: that the United States has "the intention to use Europe as the battlefield in its war with the Soviet Union". Note well that "its"; *as petite guerre à lui*. The Pointon, McMahon implies, has decided, for obscure reasons of its own, that it wants to fight a nuclear war somewhere and Europe happens to be a convenient battlefield. Even the best philosophers would profit from a minimal knowledge of history, and it would not have taken much research to show McMahon that the Americans joined

the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the urging of Western European powers who felt too weak to defend themselves after the Second World War; that they introduced battlefield nuclear weapons because the Europeans were unwilling to go to the expense and trouble of providing for their own conventional defence; and that the present ill-advised TNE project was devised to reassure West Europeans that a nuclear war would not be confined to their territory, but that any Soviet first-strike against Europe would trigger off unacceptable escalation. One does not even require this degree of historical expertise to observe that the only conceivable cause for war in Europe, nuclear or otherwise, would be a Soviet military attack. Why therefore does McMahon and those who think like him consider that this would be the Americans' war?

There are other oddities about the book, including the belief that Polaris missiles were equipped with single warheads until the Chevaline programme provided them with more, and a pervading assumption that the defence of the United Kingdom can be considered in isolation from the Continent of Europe - anachronistic enough in 1939 if not 1914, today a total absurdity. But the issue of Britain's nuclear weapons programme in itself can be fairly examined in spite of all this, and on the whole McMahon does so, reaching conclusions that will command wide support. Britain, he considers, should abandon her nuclear weapons programme, replacing it with a substantially increased effort in conventional defence, but continue to rely on an American nuclear capability and therefore remain within the Alliance. One can agree with this while doubting McMahon's expectation that it would in any way reduce the risk of war or Britain's vulnerability in the event of war; or indeed believing that that risk is anywhere near so great as he believes. It would simply be a more sensible way of spending our money.

On the need to improve "conventional" forces and so diminish reliance on a decreasingly credible nuclear threat, all these writers agree. Indeed a massive consensus appears to be developing on this point on both sides of the Atlantic and across the political spectrum. There is also general agreement that this must mean pouring more money into Mary Kaldor's Baroque Arsenal, but trying to exploit the new technology to improve defensive weapons - what Alastair Buchan twenty years ago described as a "Manhattan Project" for conventional defence. Such projects can be over-romanticised. There is a belief among more radical thinkers that Europe can be defended simply by embattled farmers armed with PGMs and that Britain could hold out on her own if only we could develop enough mobile surface-to-air missiles to defend her ports. But the exaggeration of ideas does not invalidate them, and such scenarios are no less plausible than some of those, which one does indeed find on the wilder banks of the Hudson, for fighting controlled nuclear wars.

Which brings us back to our starting-point. Deterrence policy at present is not based on "the expectation of fighting a nuclear war and, supposedly, winning it". Indeed, such aspirations are probably very much less general today, thanks to the achievement by the Russians of nuclear parity, than they were in the time of McMahon. But the dilemma stated by Professor Martin still remains. So long as there is deterrence there is no denying it may fail; and "it would be irresponsible not to have plans for trying to limit the damage once nuclear weapons are used". If we are to remain dependent on the nuclear power of the United States, there is an obligation on us to be constructive in our criticisms of their policies, or at the very least to understand what they are trying to do. But there is a yet more urgent obligation: to ensure that our own weakness and inadequacy does not put too Americans into the horrifying position of having to contemplate using nuclear weapons first.

Educating the Navy

By Bryan Ranft

DONALD M. SCHURMAN:
Julian S. Corbett 1854-1922
Historian of British Maritime Policy
from Drake to Jellicoe
216pp. Royal Historical Society.
£15.75.
0 901050 59 8

Julian Corbett was a better historian and a more perceptive analyst of maritime strategy than A. T. Mahan. That he never achieved the wide recognition of his American counterpart was due to the vastly different circumstances in which they wrote and the nature of the lessons they tried to teach. Mahan's writing on the influence of sea power upon history aimed at awakening the United States to her world destiny for success, and coincided with other powerful political and economic forces flowing in the same direction. It also appealed to other nations, especially Germany and Japan, which aspired to wider influence and power, and thus became an integral part of the ideology of power politics and expansionism which characterized the dawn of the twentieth century.

Corbett's role was entirely different. He was the historian of the world's strongest navy, whose achievements in Britain's rise to world influence were firmly enshrined in the country's history and mythology; a country whose political leaders were committed to maintaining a navy superior to that of any other powers combined, and who, also, in times of panic, was aware of the vulnerability of its food and raw-material supplies to attack by rival naval powers. Corbett's role, unlike Mahan's, was not that of a leader of a crusade, but the much less appealing one of instructor and critic: it is true that he was an advocate of the continuing importance of maritime strategy, in contrast to the increasingly continentalist approach

of the military authorities, but he was never an extreme blue-water propagandist. His historical research had convinced him that success in war came through the joint efforts of army and navy and that the final decision producing an enemy's surrender could only come from the defeat of his land forces.

If this absolutely correct judgment blinded Corbett's appeal to extreme navalists, his other main strategic message, that the decisive fleet action was not the be-all and end-all of naval operations, did not endear him to the naval officers who heard his lectures at the War College. What few strategic ideas they had, based on a superficial and often second-hand knowledge of Mahan, and their image of themselves as the heirs of Nelson destined for another Trafalgar, made them strongly resistant to Corbett's insistence that the navy's role was not just to fight battles but rather to contribute to its government's wider policies and strategic purposes. This might entail less glamorous operations, such as defence of merchant shipping, blockade or participation in the combined operations against the enemy's coast, which Corbett believed to be the most effective offensive use of maritime power. The criticism of Corbett's role which culminated in his dismissal from the Admiralty's formal disavowal of his views inserted in the third volume of his official history of the naval operations of the Great War, on the grounds that he had diminished the significance of decisive fleet actions, typified the limited vision of the navy he had sought to educate. He had always recognized the need for doctrine but had argued that the best way of bringing it about was to carry out other operations which would not only further overall national strategy but also, to the extent to which they were effective, force an otherwise reluctant enemy to seek a fleet action.

Corbett's judgment did fall in his discounting of the seriousness of the threat to merchant shipping in a future war, and in his misapprehension of the impact of technical change on

the most effective methods of protection. He cannot be justly blamed for failing to foresee the German unrestricted submarine campaign, a failure which he shared with virtually all political and naval opinion, but his scepticism about the use of convoy was based on an erroneous interpretation of past wars.

Donald Schurman's aim is not to summarize Corbett's historical and strategic writing, something which he has already accomplished in his *The Education of a Navy* (1963), but to illuminate the complex interaction of Corbett's many roles: academic historian, strategic analyst, propagandist for Jackie Fisher and the Royal Navy, and finally official historian. Working very largely from Corbett's private papers, he makes clear for the first time the extent and limitations of Corbett's public support for Fisher's reforms and his later activities inside the government machine in the presentation of the Admiralty's case in the strategic debates on the eve of the First World War. He shows conclusively that Corbett's skill in formulating and drafting arguments partially compensated for the absence of a trained naval staff. This continued during the war, and Corbett's most direct impact upon strategy was his drafting of the Admiralty's general instruction to Jellicoe, embodying his own main strategic principle: Britain's survival depended on the denial of the use of the North Sea and the Atlantic to the German navy, and there was no point in fighting a fleet action in which the Grand Fleet might incur such losses as to put this denial at risk. This was to be the dominant idea behind Jellicoe's conduct at Jutland and it is not surprising that in his official history Corbett emerges as a Jellicoe supporter against the critics who asserted that he had been too cautious.

This is not an easy book to read but it certainly adds substantially to our understanding of the development of British naval historians and our most perceptive analysis of maritime strategy.

TRAVEL

A reticent city

By Alan Hollinghurst

E. M. FORSTER:
Alexandria: A History and a Guide
279pp. Michael Haag, P.O. Box 369,
London, NW3 4ER. £8.95 (paperback, £5.95).
0 902743 23 6

As there is nothing to see in Alexandria, a guide-book is especially necessary. It is necessary, too, of course, in the south of Egypt, as an expatriate, a reader of hieroglyphics and a welcome prompt on dates and dynasties; but there there is so much to see. The traveller who, stunned by the colossal temples of Upper Egypt and the visionary abstraction of the Nubian desert, gladdened with the treasures of the Egyptian Museum and the pinakes and madrasas of Cairo, resorts to Alexandria, finds an anonymous and depressing town in which a Wonder of the World is the mere basement of what it once was and Pompey's Pillar is the most pathetic of monuments. In Baedeker, Alexandria merits a meagre seven pages, whilst the temple of Karnak alone requires twenty-one. Both these places are historical enough, but in Alexandria the history has largely disappeared and is still disappearing as its polyglot culture and confluence of Mediterranean, African and Eastern worlds are increasingly Arabized and robbed of character. Apart from the sea-bathing, the only interest of the town for the modern visitor will live in the realm of historical imagination.

Hence the urgent need for a guide-book, to render the modern place transparent and to reveal beneath it the significant features of its past. Forster's *History and Guide*, just republished in its fourth edition, is the first half. Guide in the second, two-keyed together with cross-referencing notes which precisely mime the connections the visitor must make between physical and imaginative tourism. An unusually generous provision of maps traces both the tourist's route and the invisible city of the past which lies beneath. The history takes the typically Bloomshurlian form of a pageant or procession, though in this case it perhaps has a precedent in the ancient List of Kings in the Temple of Seti I at Abydos, an important carved depiction of the pharaonic succession from an earlier period. Forster achieves clear and animated distinctions of one Ptolemy from another, and intersperses succinct essays on Greek, Egyptian and Islamic thought, theology and art. Then comes what was the first ever translation of a poem by Forster's friend Cavafy, "The God Abandoned Antony", which intimates the elegiac and memory-laden experience which the city represents both historically and to many, personally, forming a link to the methodical and eminently useful Guide.

The book was first published in 1922 in Alexandria. Soon afterwards the publishers informed Forster that the entire edition had been destroyed in a warehouse fire, and on subsequently finding it intact after having received the insurance money they felt obliged to burn the books deliberately. A second Alexandrian edition appeared in 1938, and an American edition in 1961. The latest edition is the first to be published in Britain, and it includes notes which bring up to date the description of many years ago.

The edition also adds to the book a literary dimension which takes the form of Forster's *Thimble of the Cavafy*, with a vignette, Lawrence Durrell contributes a postscript and the publisher a postscript in coming to know the city. The notes are full of quotations from the *Alexandria Quartet*, which parallels the real history with a fictional one, and is thereby given a surely questionable dignity. Those who find Durrell's *Quartet* tedious, of course, will find these extracts of a different kind of tediousness, but their presence is indicative of a different tradition of topographical writing from that of Forster in the text. Forster's tediousness in the text

posed with one which posits the subjective experience of the writer as in itself a kind of travel-guide, a standard not simply of observation but of sensibility, which the reader must aspire to live up to. "Yes," Michael Haag admits, "I had arrived far, far too late at the Cecil Hotel... and like Durrell and like Antony before him I reflected on that exile to which we are abandoned by the passage of time. This is what haunts you in Alexandria." Such writing, and the quoted fictions of Durrell and Nguigui Mahfouz, illustrate a tendency to read a place through a book, as one might read Dublin through Joyce or Illiers through Proust; but beyond that the innately literary nature of these experiences of Alexandria emphasizes that it is a city of ghosts, where the writer contemplates the lack of present interest not only with history but with an orchestration of feeling.

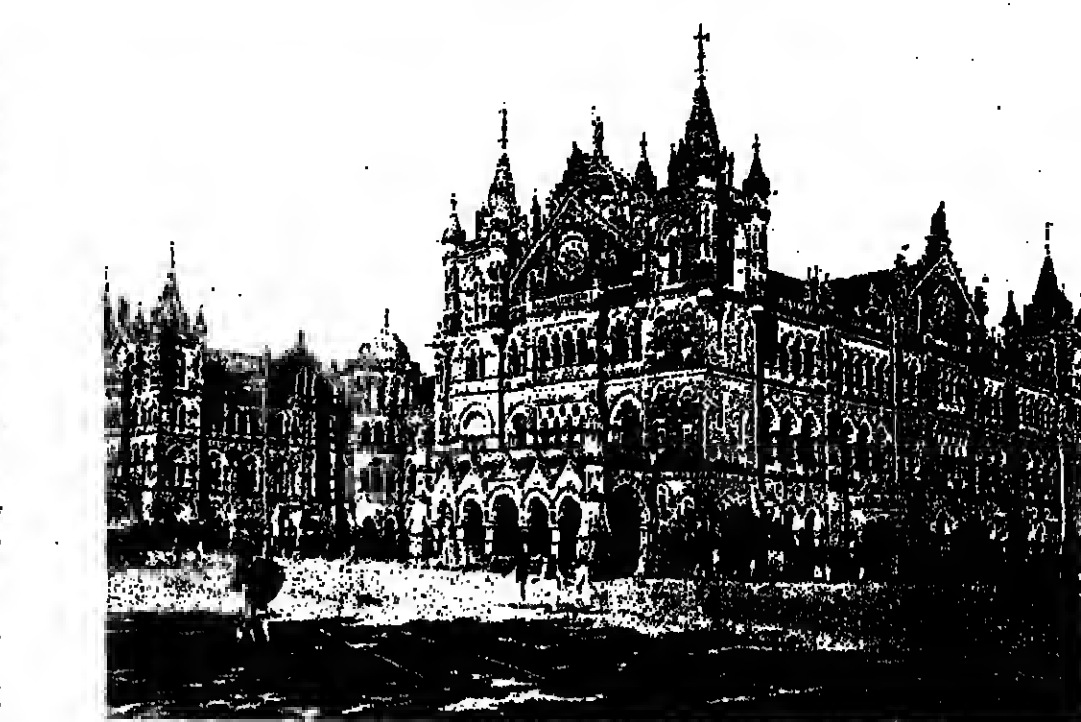
Nothing of this happens in Forster's part of the book, needless to say. Forster's personal reticence is a perfect complement to that civic inexpressiveness beneath which he detects the shapes of the past. His own enigma, however, is never disclosed, though Lawrence Durrell, alerted perhaps by the knowledge that this was the case, suggests that Forster "must (one feels) have been deeply happy, perhaps deeply in love" in Alexandria. As is now well known (a work closely paraphrased without acknowledgment in the notes) Forster's time there - as a volunteer with the Red Cross - was crucial in his development as man and writer. There he had what appears to have been his first consummate love-affair, with a trans-conductor called Mohammed Adl, who died in the year of the publication of the Guide.

In a scrupulously secret way the book constitutes a tribute to and an elegy for this relationship, substituting for a personal explanation an external and factual account of a place which in itself Forster did not much care for.

The affair was part of a general deepening of understanding which promoted his increasing geographical movement, Alexandria being halfway to the India to which he would return after the War. Even when he was most naïve as a person, his early novels had hinted at the inevitable relationship between travel and sexual knowledge and had carried within themselves a concealed prophecy of what would happen to Forster himself. After Alexandria he saw that he should have written *Maurice* better than he had (he would doubtless have lessened its dependence on fantasy); but by his love-affair he had also unconsciously reduced the actual therapeutic need to write, at the same time as both history and geography, the dual dimensions of the *History and Guide*, took him away from his primary Edwardian subject.

D. H. Lawrence had already recognized that all Forster's "thinking and his passion for humanity amounts to no more than trying to soothe with poetry a man raging with pain, which can be cured" - and cured by just such means as sexual reciprocation, and self-confidence. Forster was not a professional novelist of the kind whose technique is typically rather than a linear conception of time, which means that - at least until relatively recently - people and towns characteristically have little sense of history as a series of developing, interrelating events. The past exists as a massive, amorphous "Then", in which the lives of particular places, communities, and individuals disappear without trace.

Gillian Tindall approaches these obstacles to the success of her book with tactful good sense. She admits them - or most of them - and then works within their boundaries. The result is a biography which achieves evocation in favour of well-researched facts, but which always envelops them with sympathy and enthusiasm. Her "European methods of historical inquiry" demand that she begin at the beginning and progress systematically to the present day, but the pace of the narrative is varied by the interpolation of appropriate paragraphs - on the Paris, for instance, of



Victoria Terminus, Bombay, the headquarters of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, designed by F. W. Stevens, 1878; reproduced from the book reviewed below.

The quintessential past

By Andrew Motion

GILLIAN TINDALL:
City of Gold
The Biography of Bombay
267pp. Temple Smith. £11.50.
0 85117 215 9

In his grippingly disillusioned book *India: A Wounded Civilization*, V. S. Naipaul claims that "European methods of historical inquiry, arising out of one kind of civilization, with its own developing ideas of the human condition, cannot be applied to Indian civilization; they must be modified." Although Gillian Tindall does not refer to Naipaul in her biography of Bombay, *City of Gold*, she is well aware of the implications of this remark. She realizes that to impose too strict an order on a city which evolved - as most cities do - only partly by conscious design is to risk misrepresenting its character. She understands, too, the limitations of using Western methods to comprehend the human forces which shaped it. While the history of Bombay depends in many respects on the history of the British presence there, its innate Indian qualities have always been inescapable. Time and again the English traveller comes across what seem to be familiar bureaucratic systems, designs and terminology, only to find that they have been adapted and made strange by indigenous demands. This creates a sense of oddness and dislocation which often excites novelists and poets, but it presents obvious problems for the historian: nothing is quite what it seems at first sight.

As if this were not enough, there is another, even more fundamental problem to overcome. Tindall herself says that the Hindu *skit* (the story of humans also applies to the decay of buildings, which is a metaphorical rather than a linear conception of time, which means that - at least until relatively recently - people and towns characteristically have little sense of history as a series of developing, interrelating events. The past exists as a massive, amorphous "Then", in which the lives of particular places, communities, and individuals disappear without trace.

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the Jews - and is never distorted by the Western Romantic notion that towns are inevitably corrupt. "Urban sprawl", she says, "in spite of its pejorative name, is not a social sickness... a strong case can be made out for the town as the vitalizing, generative agent for the countryside." Bombay, for all its appalling poverty, is an ideal instance to prove her case. 40 per cent of India's maritime trade passes through it, it is the biggest cloth market in the world, and much the largest centre for employment and opportunities in western India. If it did not exist it would have to be invented.

In a special sense, of course, Bombay was invented. What the British tongue of land twelve miles long and occupied by about 8 million people, was originally a group of seven islands. The Portuguese were the first to realize their potential importance for trade, but had to surrender the advantage in 1665, when Charles II, married Catherine of Braganza, and inherited the islands as part of a job lot. Almost at once, to solve a financial embarrassment, he sold it to the East India Company, in whose care it remained for the next 200 odd years. To start with, only moderate improvements were made, partly because the Portuguese were slow to vacate their position, partly because the islands were harassed by pirates, and partly because the East India Company's local interests were concentrated elsewhere, at Surat. Although various plans were laid and buildings erected - notably by Gerald Aungier, the Governor during the 1670s - it was only in the next century that the town became an acknowledged centre.

By the mid-eighteenth century it was still possible for the islands, in spite of the malarial water which divided them, to seem "a delicate garden, voided to be the pleasantest in India". But as the volume of trade grew, the islands followed the inevitable path of industrial and domestic development. The hope, not surprisingly, was to turn a "fortified trading post" into "a properly organized and prestigious city" - and if one visitor in the 1770s, Abraham Parsons, is to be believed, this was what happened: "the streets are well laid out, and the buildings (viz. the gentlemen's houses) so numerous and handsome as to make it an elegant town. The esplanade is very extensive, and as smooth and even as a bowling green, which makes walking or riding round the town very pleasant."

While the East India Company did a great deal to create the industrial base of Bombay life, its legislative functions were often ill-defined or neglected. And during the eighteenth century, when Parliament began to regularize Company practice, it also began to curb Company power. The so-called "India Mutiny" of 1857, guaranteed that the last vestiges of control were passed to the Crown. By this time the atti-

tudes which were to become associated with the Raj were already well formed. As the water between the islands was reclaimed, and Bombay's weaving and shipbuilding were developed, the new Imperialists overlaid the squalor and grind of industrial life with an increasingly thick veneer of polite living. This was largely due to the arrival in large numbers of European women. In 1739 there were only eight unmarried English women in Bombay, twenty married, "between 4 and 8" widows, and a handful of children. By the 1860s and 70s the number of husband-hunters ("the Fishing Fleet") was such that many had to sell home-made goods to support themselves. This influx was caused by - among other things - the greater comfort of travelling by steamboats, which began a regular service in the 1830s; by the diminishing distance between England and India (the Suez Canal opened in 1869); and by the greater facility of transporting home comforts. But the women's effect, as historians have often pointed out, was a significantly mixed blessing. Through no particular fault of their own - how could they help it, being victims of their historical moment? - their "civilizing" of European expatriates also had the effect of promoting intolerance. Class- and rank-consciousness were joined by race-consciousness, and the gulf between ruler and ruled was widened.

The structure and quality of Bombay life have, obviously changed markedly to the past century. The success of the cotton trade, the expansion of which followed the installation of a water supply and sewerage system, and the railways which connected the docks to India's other trade centres, have all produced developments which have virtually buried the original seven islands. They are hidden now under the houses and shacks of sprawling, proliferating communities whose lives resist orthodox historical analysis. Yet white Bombay, like many other Indian cities, has done so much to shake off the cloak of English life which was draped upon it, and to emerge as an independent entity many of its characteristics are still recognizably European and specifically Victorian. "Paradoxically," Tindall writes, "it is now only in places like Bombay that the quintessential British nineteenth-century city exists." It is a nineteenth-century-style poverty that Bombay suffers, and a nineteenth-century-style prosperity that benefits it, in spite of its own convolutions of modernity. Tindall's "European methods" describe this extraordinary, beguiling, chaotic blend of the new and the ancient, the familiar and the strange, with a scholarly composure. No matter how much she has reflected it, she has had to hold her breath aloof from what Naipaul calls "the complex insidious life that mingles response and burial even the idea of India".

Forced destinies

By Stephen Koss

JEAN GOODMAN:
The Mond Legacy
A Family Saga
272pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£11.50.
0 297 78055 7

After etching a sensitive portrait of Edward Seago from the other side of the canvas, Jean Goodman cast about for her next literary project. Her initial impulse was to write a biography of Seago's patron, Henry Mond (the 2nd Baron Melchett), the poet-industrialist who proved his devotion to Zionism by submitting to the Covenant of Abraham. Peter Melchett, Henry's grandson and the 4th Baron, instead persuaded her to undertake "a family saga of *how the Mond*". Respectfully identified as a "radical peer", who does not believe in inherited titles and who has profited by selling them outside wedlock, young Peter (born in 1948) has vainly demonstrated his capacity for bold ideas. His advice to Goodman, however, ought to have been resisted.

This time, she has crowded her canvas with diverse figures from more than six generations, and the shifting backgrounds have forced her to resort to some erudite impressionistic brushwork. Neither the acknowledged assistance she received from the family, consisting of interviews and access to unpublished correspondence, nor the secondary sources on which she heavily relies are uniformly sufficient to her purpose. Attempting more than she could have reasonably hoped to accomplish, she substitutes imagination for scholarship, and anecdotes for analysis. The result is a chatty, well-intentioned book, which does not grapple — as the Mond themselves did — with complexities of circumstance and ideas.

Family history is notoriously difficult to write, whether from outside or within. Goodman compounds the problem by the ambivalence of her vantage-point and, still more, by her seemingly limited facility with ritual, science, economics, and political structure. Determined to see the Mond as the custodians of a "legacy", which she breathlessly celebrates, she further diminishes their significance by first dabbling them with whitewash and then coating them with treacle.

As a dynasty, the Mond's qualify for the multi-dimensional treatment that S. C. Clegg's magisterially seconded to the early Gladstones or Lord David Cecil to his later forerunners. They were strong-minded men and women, usually aggressively

ambitious, and sometimes militantly iconoclastic. They reacted against each other as much as against successive social constraints, and were adept at exploiting opportunities. Their philanthropy was legendary, though, as Goodman reveals, their finances were often strained. From one generation to the next, and even concurrently, they varied in their ideological attachments, religious and racial perceptions, and degrees of aesthetic refinement.

Ludwig Mond, co-founder of the chemical works that was to become a parent firm of ICI, dominates the group portrait. His "almost obsessive interest in politics", manifested by the red tie he sported during the revolutions of 1848, had faded by the time of his arrival in England in 1862. His Anglophile mother, curiously inspired by the success story of Disraeli, supposedly discerned racial barriers on the horizon and therefore connived at his emigration. "I shall go to London and see if I cannot force my destiny," Ludwig proclaimed to an aunt after a preliminary sojourn among the Dutch, "an awful people". Truth to tell, he entertained the same objections to the English and their dank climate. But he soon met the Brunner brothers, Henry and John, whose commercial contacts and meagre reserves of capital made it possible for him to introduce and perfect the sulphur-recovery process, licensed by the Solvay, that he had brought with him from the Continent. Ludwig, if not his young wife, was thereafter largely oblivious to his surroundings.

He accompanied John Brunner to hear Gladstone in 1868, but declined to endorse his partner's Liberal candidacy in 1885. "He did not begrudge Brunner a political career," insists Goodman, "but because he could not support the Liberal policy one of the main topics of conversation between them lapsed." As Irish Home Rule had not yet reared its head, it is not clear which "Liberal policy" was the stumbling-block. Goodman lends too much credence to Ludwig's "socialism", ascribing to it enlightened employment practices which derived more logically from Brunner's radicalism. Alfred Mond, Ludwig's younger son, realized as much, and followed Brunner — at a distance — into Parliament. He joined the Liberals, he told his father, because of the paucity of "clevermen" in the ranks. From start to finish, Alfred's career at Westminster was one of amug miscalculation.

Rector Bollito, who published a life of Alfred Mond (1st Baron Melchett) in 1933, was said to have regretted that he had not chosen Ludwig as his subject. Of all the Mond, Alfred (spurred on by his wife) was the least attractive, and Goodman merely accentuates his de-

ficiencies by striving to discount them. His guttural speech was the least of his handicaps. "Vails for the Velch" was not, as reported here, his "much-quoted slogan" at Salford in 1900, but the mocking call-out of his opponents at Swansea later on. Described by Lady Astor, who never minced words, as "the ugliest man in the House of Commons", Alfred was certainly among the most relentlessly self-seeking. He impressed Margot Asquith, but not her husband, who denied him a ministerial appointment. Lloyd George, with a generosity born of desperation, made him Minister of Health in 1921. Contrary to Goodman's impression, it was not a victory for progressive reform. After the fall of the coalition, he reverted to tactics of playing off Asquith against Lloyd George, proffering his allegiance to the higher bidder. Early in 1926, ostensibly to counterbalance Lloyd George's drift to the left, he converted to Toryism. Lloyd George likened him to Judas, "another notorious member of his race". Sir Oswald Mosley, disclaiming such anti-Semitism, extolled

Alfred as the ideal Jew: their relationship goes unmentioned here. It would have been easier to understand Alfred, and perhaps even to sympathize with him, had the author elucidated the background to his predicament. There are two fleeting references to the Mond-Turner conference in 1927, inexplicably designated "the pinnacle of his public career", with proportionately more attention being given to his house-keeping arrangements and his friendship with Lillah McCarthy. "Like Ludwig, Alfred despised small talk and gossip," we are told, "yet he differed from his father in his love of familial trivia." From that, one may assume that he would have disliked the chapters about himself, but enjoyed those about his heirs.

Alfred's son Henry had attended Ludwig at his death bed. "We all hope that Henry will make himself necessary," were the patriarch's last words. Henry, who formally undid his baptism, headed this injunction in ways that Ludwig could not have anticipated, much less approved.

Purveyor to the presses

By T. C. Barker

W. J. READER:
Bewster
A History
426pp. Cambridge University Press.
£24.
0 521 24165

This book is as much a tribute to Sir Eric Bowater as a history of the remarkable international conglomerate which he contrived to build up between the mid-1920s and his death in 1962. A fairly frequent visitor to the tables at Le Touquet at one time, he was a gambler by instinct. He took enormous risks on the company's behalf with borrowed money. At the same time, his commanding presence, deep voice and piercing stare induced respect in many (including, apparently, his creditors) and terrified not a few. He was fortunate to operate in a branch of business, newspaper, for which demand increased even during the worst interwar years. Under his very personal leadership Bowater was by the early 1930s making one-fifth of Britain's newspaper. By the time of his death it was producing a tenth of the western world's vastly greater output, besides other types of paper and paper-based products. Someholders of the 1950s will recall with nostalgia his splendidly stage-managed performances at Sittingbourne or elsewhere, to which they had been invited in specially chartered Pullman trains.

But by the time of his retirement, in 1961, he had overreached himself. He had gambled for too long on the ever-increasing UK demand for newspaper and his touch in the recently formed EEC was not so sure as it had been in North America. The violent efforts of Sir Christopher Chantelero and others to decentralize "Wegman" and rebuild the Bowater Paper Corporation during the past two decades — the word "paper" was significantly dropped from the title in 1972 — are long-judiciously compressed into a thirty-page epilogue but are, quite understandably, not the author's main concern.

Not are the forty years or so before young Eric Bowater came to impress his ability upon the older members of the family. The firm had been started by his grandfather as a London selling agency for provincial paper manufacturers and as a dealer in waste paper. A hard-drinking and thoroughly disreputable man, the founder coined money but made life miserable for the tribe of his sons who became his partners. One of these made his name in the City, received a knighthood, became Lord Mayor in 1918, and was later an MP.

Another was knighted in 1920. W. V. Bowater & Sons, which produced a pre-tax profit of under £40,000 a year in the early 1920s, may not have been a large business; but its family directors were already not without personal standing in the world's financial capital.

Eric Bowater's original wish for an army career was brought to a sudden end in 1915 when he found himself buried alive in a dugout. A near-miss had killed two fellow officers and left him trapped underground in the pitch darkness until he was rescued eighteen hours later. He went about on crutches for about three years until a leading neurologist demonstrated to him that his ailment was psychological, not physical. This, in Eric Bowater's view, was a shameful state of affairs and needed to be rectified. According to W. J. Reader, the shell-burst wrecked his military ambitions and directed the force of his imperious personality against his earlier inclinations, into the family business. The company had planned to go into manufacturing before the war but it was not until the mid-1920s that Bowater's Paper Mills Ltd was created to put up a newspaper factory on a site at Northfleet. Eric Bowater was at hand to take charge.

The financing of this venture, in which Armstrong, Whitworth, struggling to diversify out of armaments, was to play a part, was associated with another paper-mill and electrical installation which that company was building for the Newfoundland Power & Paper Company at Corner Brook: Bowater was to have the selling agency and Eric Bowater was on the board. When Armstrong, Whitworth got into difficulties and the Northfleet mill was endangered, Bowater conducted a clever rescue operation but only at the cost of losing control to Lord Rothermere, head of the Home-growth newspaper group, though Bowater himself (then aged thirty-two) took over as chairman. As well as managing director, of both W. V. Bowater and Bowater's Paper Mills, Lord Beaverbrook also gave his support and made possible Bowater's second newspaper mill, opened in 1930 at Ellesmere Port in Cheshire, to supply the northern press.

Bowater, having been given his chance as quite a young man, enjoyed a long run of good fortune during which he rarely lost a trick. When Rothermere needed capital elsewhere in 1932, he recovered control of his company, outwitting Beaverbrook in the process — no mean feat. When, in 1936, the older and larger Edward Lloyd Mills at Sittingbourne were offered to him, he boldly retook the capital needed. British consumption of newspaper per head of population was then the highest in the world and Bowater's

Jean Goodman, who was attracted to him in the first instance, depicts him and his wife Gwen with emphatic warmth. She has a harder time with their son Julian and his wife Sonia, lavishing too much space on their equestrian pursuits and medical upsets. "A fairy-tale couple, perennially young", Julian and Sonia are romanticized accordingly. The protracted description of Julian's fatal swim at Majorca reads embarrassingly like a discarded fragment from an Iris Murdoch novel. Could they really have played Handel's "Water Music" at his memorial service?

All the Mond, whether their invariably "sparkling" eyes are blue or brown, are credited "with vision ahead of their time", although Julian's was admittedly "never quite worked out". The dislocations of the British steel industry testify to that. This book, not so much uncritical as unquestioning, will make a nice Christmas or Chanukkah present for family intimates. *The Mond Legacy*, however, is not up to the artistic quality of the Mond Bequest.

product fetched good prices at a time when raw material costs were under 1937, Eric Bowater returned to Newfoundland to buy forests. The Newfoundland authorities demanded that he should also process some of the timber in their country and this introduced to the scene that now familiar figure on Britain's interwar industrial scene, Frater Taylor, the Bank of England's company doctor. The British government had earlier guaranteed debenture stock of the Power & Paper Company at Corner Brook and he was the Bank's representative on its board. This expert rationalization persuaded Bowater to buy the equity of Corner Brook instead of merely putting down a sub-plant pulp mill, thus establishing the company as a manufacturer in the more rapidly growing newspaper market of North America. This, in its turn, led to further vast developments in Tennessee in the 1950s, financed yet again by heavy borrowing and gambling on the prospect of good future profits.

In the United Kingdom after 1945, diversification into wallboard and other building materials based on paper, packaging (increasingly important with the spread of supermarkets) and tissues (50:50 with Scott Paper of America) were brought in good profits, which were in due course to offset the failure of the British newspaper industry to continue its headlong growth. This volume provides an unusual perspective upon the affluent society as well as upon trends in the media.

The author, who already has a series of highly regarded company histories to his credit, culminating in his splendid two-volume work on ICI, has here been confronted with an unusually difficult and complex assignment. On the one hand there is the colourful personality of Sir Eric Bowater, surely a gift to any writer; but we are allowed to see only his business face (and not too much of that), with one or two tantalizing glimpses of his private life, though this is evidently of some relevance to our fuller understanding of the story. On the other hand, the company's heavy borrowing in expectation of future profit inevitably entails long stretches of text and table on financial matters, a terrible challenge to the ablest writer. Given these two disadvantages, the first of which may have stemmed from the nature of his commission and the second of which certainly did, Dr Reader has again scored a considerable triumph. He never fails to relate Bowater to his economic and social background, and in doing so he and his now seasoned research team have made good use of Bank of England, Beaverbrook, Northfleet and Reid (Newfoundland) records as well as the extensive archives of the Bowater business itself. Sir Eric would have been pleased.

Predestined to preserve

By Michael Davie

JOHN MORTIMER:
Clinging to the Wreckage
A Part of Life
200pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£8.50.
0 297 78010 7

The title of this slice of autobiography, by the celebrated QC and inventor of Rumpole, evidently refers to the way he has clung to the wreckage of the middle-class values with which he was brought up. An obligation to try to change the world was not one of them. The opening scene of *Clinging to the Wreckage* is set in 1971, which is when John Mortimer's name first became generally known to the non-paying public. He had been briefed for the defence in the Oz trial. Richard Neville, a young Australian, and "vaguely liberated school-child" had published a "School-kids" version of Oz magazine and were subsequently prosecuted at the Old Bailey in an exotic trial that lasted for six weeks. At the time, as Neville and his co-defendants dressed up in gym alps and blonde wigs and children waved provocative banners in the street, Mortimer was seen as a leading light of the avant-garde, a champion of the rights of school-children to publish rude drawings of Rupert Bear. The reputation stuck.

Looking back, Mortimer finds Flower Power and Children's Lib and the Alternative Society as remote as the Middle Ages. "What, I now wonder, did everyone think was going on?" He supposes, with a touch of *de haut en bas*, that school-kids of the Oz age are now driving Ford Corinas with a nodding dot in the window or holding down tough jobs as chartered accountants. (Richard Neville is back in Australia, where he told Clive James in a recent television interview that he valued the material pleasures of Sydney.) Mortimer himself makes it plain that he had no particular sympathy for whatever improbable dreams of liberation filled the heads of Neville and his supporters, though no particular hostility, either. Later on, Kenneth Tynan, when he conceived the idea of *Oh, Calcutta!*, invited Mortimer to give the project legal advice. Mortimer does not say what advice he gave, but he does say that the show made him regret that Tynan had not stuck to writing. His defence of homosexual magazines, or books prosecuted for obscenity, had

nothing to do with any Tynesque zeal for the promotion of sexual diversity or pornography; he specialised in such cases for a time simply because "the attempts of the law to control the written word seemed to me dangerous and likely to put out Courts of Justice in a somewhat ridiculous light". The law in question, he thought, was unfortunate not only because it attacks free speech, but because it is "unnecessary and inoperable".

Mortimer is not a strong believer in Free Will. His father, by now familiar to millions through Mortimer's direct (*A Voyage Round My Father*) and indirect (Rumpole) descriptions of him, was a deeply English figure, sceptical about God and love, and temperamentally inclined to dodge as many of life's problems as possible. Mortimer is equally sceptical about God (the most he is prepared to admit to is "a sense of wonder"), though less sceptical about love, and he is no stranger to problems, especially those caused by finance and matrimony. But the main difference between the two men perhaps is that the son found a way of dealing with his problems (including his father) by becoming a novelist and playwright. "Writing down events is the writer's great protection, his defence and his safety-valve. Anger and misery, defeat, humiliation and self-disgust can be changed and used to provide a sense of achievement as he fills his pages".

His father's sense of achievement, outside his legal practice, came from his garden, twenty acres of ebbly fields near Henley in which he planned huge herbaceous borders and fruit cages of loganberries and melons. His wife, "whose life went underground when she married my father", kept a diary in which she would record the progress of the garden, adding occasional afterthoughts about the marriage or divorce of her son. Mortimer now lives in his parents' house; the book ends with an account of how, after his parents' death, he took possession of the house, on a winter's day, and wondered how the overgrown garden "might be put back in time" to the days when he used to sit beside his father's hammock and read aloud the Sherlock Holmes stories his father already knew by heart.

The main underlying theme of *Clinging to the Wreckage* is filial affection: the wish to preserve, not to destroy, his father's disappearing world. Describing his parents, Mortimer's writing has a special veracity and force. Living in his father's house, or in his father's old chair, he re-

mains intensely interested by them, perhaps in part because, in the English middle-class manner, they were always, with their son, intensely reticent — until his mother died. Mortimer did not know that she secretly wrote short stories. Most of the rest of the book is determinedly entertaining, self-deprecating, and anecdotal about his not especially dramatic life, with brief accounts of celebrities he has met — John Osborne, Peter Sellers, Dylan Thomas — and descriptions of amorous exploits.

Mortimer's determination to avoid stodginess sometimes leads him astray. What is unusual about him is not his readiness to spill the beans about his private life but his readiness to spill the beans about the law. Most lawyers are cautious by nature and rarely write about their profession with candour, wishing to preserve the horsehair wigs and air of mystery. Mortimer both hates the law and loves it. He is no longer, one imagines, dependent on the Bar for a livelihood. When in *Clinging to the Wreckage*, he describes the art of advocacy, or the nature of judges, or the importance of the down-at-heel Rumpole in the preservation of our liberties, he is doing what he alone, apparently, is able or willing to do. The glimpses of other lawyers, or solicitors' managing clerks, or the members of the Court of Appeal are more original than those of Trevor Howard or Sam Spiegel. Perhaps Mortimer will now consider stretching his considerable talents by writing the book he certainly has in him about the legal system and its practitioners, without worrying too much about whether it is entertaining or not.

The ones in between

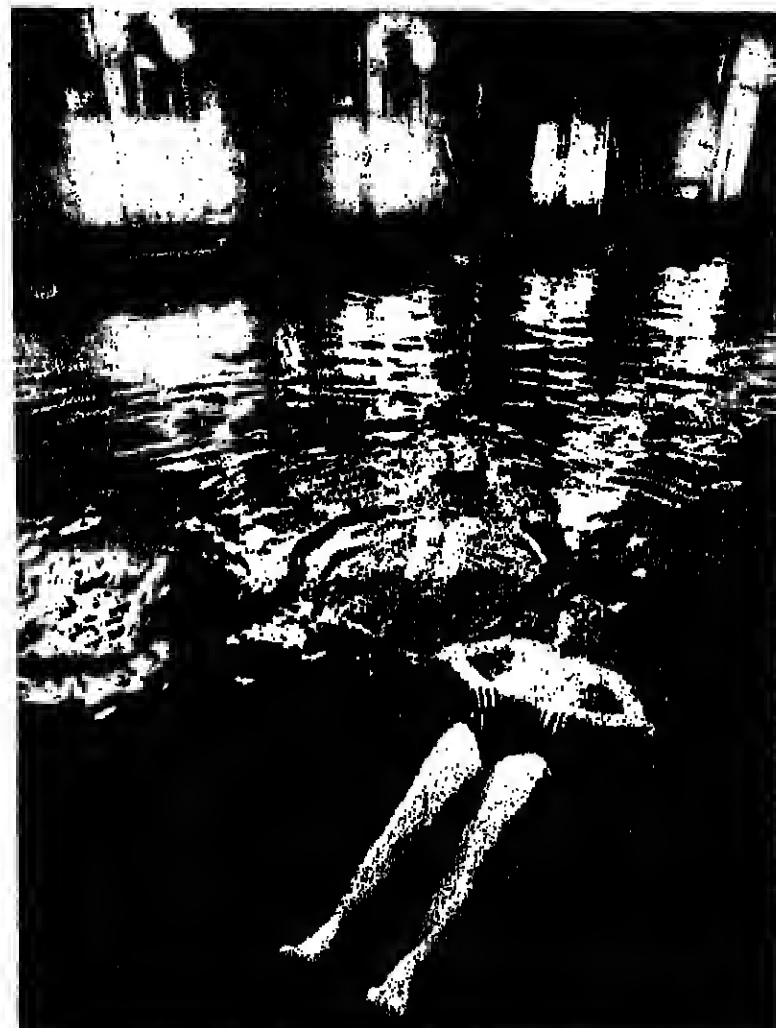
By Victoria Glendinning

IAN BRADLEY:
The English Middle Classes Are Alive and Kicking
240pp. Collins. £6.95.
0 00 216276 8

The survival of the middle classes is in some sense inevitable: so long as there is any pecking order at all, and so long as society has its richer and its poorer, there will be what Belloc called "the People in Between". In England, progressive taxation and the Welfare State have fattened this middle band. Ian Bradley, to give his book a hook and a background, runs dutifully over the history and development of the English middle classes from the merchants of the Middle Ages to 1981; and his personal view is that their continued existence — presumably he means as at present constituted — "is vital to our survival as a civilized society".

An early point that he makes, rightly, is that "there are at least as many varieties of middle classness as there are different newspapers", being read by commuters on the 8.23. Typical readers of *The Times*, the *Telegraph*, the *Daily Mail* or *Express* and the *Guardian* represent different and often mutually incompatible or antagonistic sets of values. Mr Bradley characterizes these groupings with humour and accuracy — but so could any of the commuters on the 8.23. There is nothing new here. There is no single homogeneous middle class. There never has been.

What has happened though, as he stresses, is that the old upper class and aristocracy, though not statistically significant, no longer exist as a concept of much importance. There are "smart" people, whom Bradley does not scrutinize quite closely enough, but these are not all the same old lot. The epithet "middle-class", used now as a pejorative adjective by radicals, students and others, has come to denote "little more than a 'standard English' accent and a conventional life-style. It is used to be used, in precisely the same dismissive tone of voice, by the old upper class to designate the set just beneath them socially."



That floating feeling. A view of a brine bath, Cliftonham, Gloucestershire, from Ian Bradley's superb collection of photographs, *The English* (103pp. Allen Lane, £5.95. 0 7139 33).

This is a well-ploughed field, and Bradley leans heavily on the work of other authors, particularly Angus Macdonald and Roy Jenkins. He does not write about the middle classes from 1981 to 1982, but from 1960s radicals ten years later, shows how unexpectedly valuable her novels will be as social history in years to come. Apropos, one area in which he might have spread himself, but did not, is the classification of women. He remarks that "occupation" is an insufficient guide to class, but since it takes no account of children and housewives, and leads to the assumption that wives and children automatically belong to the same class as the "head of the household". He might with profit have looked closer at this, as he might have made more of the destabilizing effect of the "liberated" woman. Discussing the changing composition of entry into public schools, he notes that "many places now go to foreign pupils and girls", as if girls might be outside the class structure. If they are, and even if they are not, what are the implications of the breakdown of this and other male preserves? The social consequences could be costlier to the status quo than the mere provision of extra changing-rooms and lavatories. Some of the residual antagonism to the idea of women's priests, for example, may be due to the suspicion that most women lack taste and tolerance for fantasies of hierarchy and patriarchal ritual.

Mr Bradley is more interesting not only about the assimilation of some of the old working class into the middle class as a result of improved pay and education, but about the addition of traditional working-class survival techniques by the middle class — clericalism and professionalism, unionized, civil servants go on strike while the hap-frogging pay claims of manual workers to preserve differentials "hardly suggests that the middle classes have the monopoly of selfishness and competitiveness". Em-bourgeoisement on the one hand, and proletarianization on the other, have made that section of society which thinks of itself as middle-class so broad as to be almost meaningless, though Bradley would not agree. In the 1950s and 60s it really seemed to many people that a "classless society" was on the way, but it didn't happen; the subdivisions and

status intangibles proliferate still.

In a recent article in the *Guardian* (March 1, 1982) Jeremy Seabrook in the chaos in the Labour Party, as a result of the gradual transformation of traditional Labour voters over the past thirty years. Labour leaders accepted the sweets of capitalism in good faith, to improve the living conditions of the rank-and-file: in the process the Socialist dream receded into folklore. The job came to seem "not the antagonists of the poor, but the model of what the poor would like to be". Seabrook attributed this transformation to "the wonderful flexibility of capital"; but rather, I think, it is a reflection of human acquisitiveness and an innate, corporate English aspiration to middle-classness. The language of separation in British industry, with separate washrooms and dining-rooms for management, who may also have hefty financial perks and, at the top, meaningless, high salaries — could not survive for five minutes if it were not unconsciously condoned, even approved of and aspired to, by most of the workforce.

Our new Japanese masters may change some of this; the angry groundswell on the Labour left and in the inner cities may change more. But it is like shifting the rock of ages. Speaking of which, Bradley has an inflated idea of the "Church of England's social and moral significance. He cites with satisfaction the one and a half million who attend its services on Sunday; but what is the population of England? He is wrong too on another point, as when he says it is "rare to hear a working-class accent" on Robin Day's "Question Time". Perhaps not often, from the panel; but from the audience, who make the programme, all the time and with great articulacy and feeling.

Bradley's rather complacent book, while providing endless matter for discussion and argument, leaves a deposit of unease. The idea of middle-classness may be taken as read; it may no longer be very useful. With growing unemployment and the new post-industrial world almost upon us, we perhaps need new structures and some lateral thinking on the shaping of English society. The conceptual cake may have to be divided in a new way.

"Deutero-Isiah". I have changed this to "Jones" because "Jones" is clearly a proper name, whereas "Deutero-Isiah" is not. For brevity, I will use the letter "C" to abbreviate "Chapters 40 to 55 of the book of Isaiah". The key point, then, is this. Even though we have introduced the name "Jones" as a name of the author of C, Kripke holds that the name "Jones" is not equivalent in meaning to the definite description "the author of C". He observes that our understanding of propositions expressed by sentences containing "Jones" or the author of C allows us to consider whether these propositions would have been true or false in various merely possible situations. Furthermore, in evaluating the truth value of propositions of this sort in various possible situations, we interpret a definite descriptive phrase of the form "the so and so" as referring to whatever thing or person in that situation would have been the so and so in that situation. For example, we take the phrase "the author of C" to refer to that person, if any, who would have uniquely authored C in that situation. Now, if things had been different, someone else might have been the author of C - someone other than Jones. We use the definite description "the author of C" to pick out that other person in that possible situation rather than Jones, who is the author of C in the actual situation. In other words, a definite description will not normally function as what Kripke calls a "rigid designator". It will not normally pick out the same thing or person in every counterfactual situation.

On the other hand, a proper name like "Jones" is a rigid designator. When we evaluate the truth value of the proposition expressed, say, by "Jones was an author" for various possible situations, we always take "Jones" to refer to the same person, namely the person in the actual situation who (we are assuming) wrote C. We therefore suppose this proposition is not a necessary truth. It would have been false, e.g. if someone other than Jones had been the author of C. Of course, the proposition expressed by "the author of C was an author" would still have been true in that case.

So much, then, for Kripke's views about rigid designators. Dummett appears to want to contest these views, but it is very difficult to see what he takes his objection to be. Part of the problem is that he begins by incorrectly identifying rigid designation with having a wide scope. (To say an expression has wide scope is to say it is the primary operator in the sentence. For example, "The author of C might have not been an author" is ambiguous, depending on the relative scopes of the definite description "the author of C" and the modal verb "might". If it means "The author of C was someone who might have not been an author" [which is presumably true], then the definite description has wide scope. If it means "It might have been the case that someone was both the author of C and not an author" [which is false], the modal verb and not the definite description has wide scope.) This was his interpretation of rigidity in the first edition of *Frege* and also on page 183 of *Interpretation*, where he says "As subject, a definite description has wide scope, i.e. behaves as rigid in Kripke's sense ...". But this is simply a mistake. Saying a term has wide scope is not equivalent to saying it is rigid.

By page 574 of *Interpretation* Dummett gives evidence of having noticed this mistake, because he raises the question whether the mechanism of scope is adequate to replace that of rigid designation (my emphasis). A reader ignorant of Kripke's views might well be puzzled

here, in the light of Dummett's earlier equating of rigidity with wide scope. A few pages later, on pages 581-82, he quotes a brief comment of Kripke's pointing out that Dummett's identification of rigid designation with wide scope was a "technical error", which indeed it was. But does Dummett acknowledge the error? Well, yes and no. He agrees that in Kripke's "regimentation" of our language and its accompanying semantic theory, rigidity can be distinguished from wide scope. But he does not agree that the distinction needs to be made for sentences of ordinary language.

Now, it is one thing to disagree with Kripke's theory: it is quite another to mis-state it. When Dummett identifies rigid designation with wide scope, he does not disagree with Kripke, he mis-states Kripke's theory. It is quite clear that this is a mis-statement of the theory and that Dummett now recognizes this. Kripke has pointed out the mistake, and in Dummett's remarks about Kripke's "regimentation" of our language, he acknowledges the point. It is no good pretending that something else is at issue.

In addition to the matter of scholarly ethics, there is also a question of intelligibility here. Dummett's waffling on this point makes it very difficult to follow his discussion. If we take what he says at face value, what he says on page 183 of *Interpretation* simply contradicts what he says on page 574. If we try to give him the benefit of the doubt, however, all sorts of complications arise.

For example, his remarks about "regimentation" versus ordinary language suggest interpreting him as claiming that the facts about our ordinary use of language can be accounted for without supposing that proper names are rigid designators. If we suppose instead that names always have the widest possible scope. But this alternative suggestion implies that "The author of C was an author" and "Jones was an author" should always be evaluated in the same way, no matter what possible situation they are applied to, and is incompatible with the fact that the former sentence expresses a proposition that could not have been false as long as someone had been the author of C, while the latter expresses a proposition that could have been false even if someone had been the author of C (if it was someone else).

In places Dummett suggests that, in addition to supposing (1) the name "Jones" functions like the definite description "the author of C", except that it must always be understood as having wide scope, we must also suppose (2) the claim that a proposition P could have been false is equivalent to a claim of the form "It could have been that not P" where the sentence replacing "not P" expresses the denial of P. This implies that, if we adopt the convention that a definite description is always to be understood as having wide scope, then the claim (a) that the proposition expressed by "The author of C was an author" could have been false is equivalent to the claim (b) that the author of C was someone who could have not been an author. But these claims are obviously not equivalent, since (a) is false and (b) is true. So this suggestion too is refuted.

Perhaps Dummett does not agree that (a) is clearly false and (b) clearly true. On page 578 (of *Interpretation*) he says our intuitions do not raise the question of the truth of sentences as well as their truth conditions. If he does, they give conflicting evidence about whether the modal status of a sentence is a matter of judgment about whether the proposi-

tion expressed by the sentence would have been true in various nonactual situations. Perhaps Dummett believes people have no views or have conflicting views about the modal status of sentences. But he offers no evidence here and the judgments Kripke reports would seem so common and firm as ordinary judgments about language ever are.

Some things Dummett says indicate that he is not (only) making an empirical claim about ordinary usage but is (also) making a philosophical claim about what people could intelligibly mean by their words. Let us examine this philosophical claim.

Dummett supposes, plausibly, that one's understanding of the meaning of an expression must somehow manifest itself in the way in which one uses that expression. He also supposes, controversially, that there are only two relevant uses, namely (1) the use of sentences on their own to make assertions, ask questions, request something, and so forth, and (2) the use of sentences as parts of

larger sentences. He therefore suggests that the meaning of a sentence has two aspects: (1) what he calls the content of the sentence, namely that aspect of its meaning the understanding of which can be manifested in the use of the sentence on its own, and (2) what he calls the *ingredient sense* of the sentence, namely that aspect of its meaning the understanding of which can be manifested either in the use of the sentence on its own or in its use as a part of other sentences.

Finally, Dummett argues that, if these are the only aspects of the meaning of a sentence, then judgments about the modal status of a sentence cannot, as Kripke asserts, be manifestations of one's understanding of the meaning of the sentence.

Of course, if the argument works, it also shows this: If judgments about the modal status of a sentence are (as they certainly seem to be) manifestations of one's understanding of the meaning of the sentence, then the two aspects of meaning, content

and ingredient sense, are not the only aspects of the meaning of a sentence. There is also an aspect that includes content and ingredient sense and is also manifest in judgments about the truth value of the sentence in question. We might call this the "total sense" of a sentence.

Dummett's argument against Kripke simply assumes that content and ingredient sense are the only aspects of the meaning of a sentence and that there is no third aspect of the sort just mentioned, total sense. So he simply begs the question against Kripke, who explicitly rejects that assumption in the passage Dummett refers to. Furthermore, since Kripke seems obviously right in rejecting that assumption, Dummett's argument amounts to a trivial refutation of his own view that there are only the two aspects of meaning he mentions.

Here, as elsewhere in these books, there is no interesting upshot to a lengthy and confused discussion.

Grammar without psychology

By L. Jonathan Cohen

JERROLD J. KATZ:
Language and Other Abstract Objects
251pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £16 (paperback, £7.95).
0 631 12946 4

One of the most exciting intellectual developments of the 1960s was the rapprochement between linguistics and psychology that was promoted by Chomsky's ideas about the nature of grammar. Chomsky characterized the grammar of a particular language as an assignment of structural descriptions to phonetic sequences, and on this view general grammatical theory was concerned to determine what can count as such a structural description and how such assignments are made. Since every speaker of a language seems to have acquired a tacit knowledge of its grammar, and every new-born child is apparently equipped to learn any human language, it follows, on Chomsky's view, that grammatical theory should be able to reveal important details about the innate mechanisms of language. The grammarian's study of linguistic universals is of the same time an inquiry into those features of the human mind that make it possible for any child to learn its mother-tongue.

It seemed to many, therefore, in the 1960s that Chomskian linguistics might promote an important new depth of understanding in the psychological study of language and speech-comprehension. But when psychologists sought to discover experimental confirmation for the kinds of linguistic universal that Chomsky postulated there was little or none forthcoming. Nor were grammarians prepared to take the actual results of these experiments into account so as to modify their theories of linguistic universals in any way.

So in the 1970s most of the psychologists and grammarians who had been interested in the issue drew back from the rapprochement that Chomsky had promoted. In their view the new grammatical theory, in one or other of the many versions that have proliferated, might well give a much better account than any given hitherto of what it is that a language-learner learns, even without being able at the same time to give an account of how he learns it. But some of Chomsky's early collaborators have been rather reluctant to make this move, and it is only now that Professor Jerrold Katz announces his own conversion - or rather apostasy. His new book is nevertheless an important contribution to the literature of general linguistics, besides arguing on theoretical grounds that Chomsky is wrong to suppose that grammar is a branch of psychology; he also puts forward a challenging new thesis of his own.

Grammar, according to Katz, is to be regarded as an *a priori* study, like logic and mathematics. It is not an

empirical science, like psychology. Just as one needs to distinguish the mathematical study of numbers from the psychological study of the ideal calculator's knowledge of number, so too one has to distinguish the grammatical study of language from the psychological study of the ideal speaker's knowledge of a language. Katz sees himself as engaged in a campaign analogous to that of Frege and Husserl. Just as they sought to de-psychologize logic and mathematics, he himself is concerned to de-psychologize grammar.

English is the same language whether spoken by human beings or by an alien race with a totally different brain structure. Therefore, on Katz's view, the objects of grammatical study, such as English sentences, are independent of any spatiotemporal particularity. Hence, what can count as such a structural description and how such assignments are made. Since every speaker of a language seems to have acquired a tacit knowledge of its grammar, and every new-born child is apparently equipped to learn any human language, it follows, on Chomsky's view, that grammatical theory should be able to reveal important details about the innate mechanisms of language. The grammarian's study of linguistic universals is of the same time an inquiry into those features of the human mind that make it possible for any child to learn its mother-tongue.

Indeed Katz reconstructs the recent history of North American linguistics in ontological terms. He regards the structuralists, like Bloomfield, who dominated the pre-Chomskian scene, as nominalists. Their grammars are just data-cataloguing devices expressing distributional regularities in speech in the form of a segmentation and classification of acoustic signals. And, though Zellig Harris's introduction of a transformational apparatus into structuralist theory extended the descriptive power of taxonomic grammars, it did not alter their fundamentally nominalist character. In Katz's eyes, therefore, Chomsky's most significant innovation was to replace this nominalism by a conceptualism that identified the primary focus of a grammarian's attention with the structure of a speaker's mind rather than with the sounds or marks he makes. And Katz's own Platonism completes the nominalist philosophical triad of nominalism, conceptualism and realism. For Katz, a grammatical feature is a linguistic universal not because it is a linguistic universal but because it constitutes a fundamental regularity for language-learning, but because without it a language could not satisfy the requirement that every possible proposition or thought is in principle expressible by some sentence in the language.

There are some deep problems here. Those influenced by the views of Whorf, Quine and others on the limits to inter-translatability will not be happy with the requirement that every thought be expressible in every language. But of course this is just the kind of issue that is bound to separate nominalists from Platonists, and Katz addresses himself at some

length to the refutation of Quine's views on the subject. What Katz does not make clear, however, is how studying the grammar of a language can be regarded as a non-empirical enquiry. Even if we grant that the raw data here emerge through native-speakers' intuitions of grammatical rules, we cannot assume that for this purpose grammarians can always rely on their own intuitions. In the study of an exotic language a grammarian must somehow extract intuitions from others. Admittedly he is not concerned to explain the psychological fact that such-or-such a string of sounds has been judged grammatical. But his concern with the grammaticality of the string is nevertheless a concern with something that is empirically evidenced. In much the same way as anthropologists who studies the modal code of an exotic community is engaged in an empirical enquiry, even though it is not the same kind of empirical enquiry as one concerned with how the members of the community (who do not always live up to their moral rules or ideals) actually behave.

One may well feel, therefore, that the question whether the fundamental terms of grammar, like "sentence", "predicate", etc. should be understood in a nominalist, conceptualist or realist sense, is a question that is independent of the epistemology of linguistics. After all the realism of Aristotle, Linnaeus and other classical plant taxonomists did not make them think of botany as an *a priori* discipline like mathematics. And once this point is accepted it may become easier for grammatical theorists to make a move analogous to that which many philosophers of mathematics made some time ago. Instead of continuing to dispute whether nominalism (formalism), conceptualism (constructivism) or realism (Platonism) tells some unlikeliest true story about mathematics, they investigate, instead - rather fruitfully - the different properties and potentials that such different reconstructions of mathematics possess. Let us hope that we can now look forward to a comparable prevalence of more *a priori* attitudes in the philosophy of grammar, so that we can begin to compare dispassionately what can and cannot be achieved by nominalist, conceptualist and realist theories of grammar. And if to the end it turns out that there are no significant differences here - i.e. that the nominalism-versus-constructivism-versus-realism issue is a purely metaphysical gloss that need have no relevance to the actual content of a grammar - then at least we shall have discovered one further respect in which grammar differs from mathematics.

Blake shows how a sort of conventional Mummerstet evolved, whereby authors could place speech as Doric or low-class without the use of a carefully localized dialect. He traces the origins of comic Cockney, and demonstrates how often writers have used spelling-dislocations (with no obvious phonetic equivalences) to indicate departures from received usage. In fact, social registers have been marked off by syntax or vocabulary more rarely than one would have supposed. Pronunciation is the usual index of non-standard speech in literature; on the evidence collected here, and most of that "inaccurately" recorded, as a phonologist would see it. Here and there the discussion teeters on the edge of a grotesque speculation ("The Heart of Midlothian is an important novel because it contains more varieties of dialect than that spoken in the Edinburgh region"), but generally Blake remembers that it is, after all, literature which constitutes his material.

The fullest and most satisfactory coverage is accorded to Skelton, medieval and Tudor drama, Smollett, Scott, Emily Brontë and certain of the contemporary authors. Mr Blake seems to envisage a well-informed

Re-saying the sayings

By Stanley Wells

R. W. DENT:
Shakespeare's Proverbial Language
Aa Index
Unnumbered pages. University of California Press. £20.75.
0 520 03894 0

No one has written with greater learning, humanity, and grace on Shakespeare's use of proverbs than the late F. P. Wilson, the dedicatee (with J. C. Maxwell and John Crow) of this book. His essays on "Shakespeare and the Dictionary of Common Life" and "The Proverbial Wisdom of Shakespeare" are, and must surely long remain, the classic treatments of the subject. In the second, justifying this branch of study, he wrote that "A knowledge of proverbs may help us to establish a text; it may help us to interpret its meaning; it may help us to discover with what tone a passage is to be read or spoken". When Wilson wrote this, the standard reference work, to which he paid just and generous tribute while also drawing attention to deficiencies in it, was Morris Palmer Tilley's massive *Dictionary of the Proverbs in English in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, posthumously published in 1950, which contains close on 12,000 entries, each illustrated with quotations often numerous, from works of the period. It has a "Shakespeare Index" offering cross-references from Shakespeare's works to almost 3,000

citations in the collection. Since it appeared, two other important proverb collections have been published: B. J. and H. W. Whiting's *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings mainly before 1500* (1968), and F. P. Wilson's thorough revision of *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (1970).

These reference books provide the Shakespeare scholar with a wealth of material useful to the establishing of Shakespeare's text and to comprehension, annotation, and criticism of it. R. W. Dent finds that Tilley's Index "has been ignored or badly misused in a surprising number of recent major editions", and that the two later books "have been largely ignored by Shakespeare scholarship". So he has embarked upon - and brought to completion - the heroic task of providing a reference work devoted exclusively to Shakespeare, revising and expanding Tilley, of whose book this is, he modestly claims, "nothing more than a Shakespeare-oriented supplement which should prove far less subject to misuse".

The nucleus of his book, the Index, is less than forty pages long. Arranged play by play (and poem by poem), it lists relevant points of Shakespeare and follows each with one or more citations of Tilley's reference work. Regrettably, quotations from Shakespeare are not given.

Before the index, an introduction offers a number of "Precautions". Like most writers on the subject, Professor Dent offers no definition of a proverb, as he knows of none

"that will embrace all acknowledged examples". He offers warnings against Tilley's principles of inclusion, demonstrating that some of his "proverbs" are actually parodic, and that he occasionally lists recurrent ideas "never given any characteristic verbal formulation such as one tends to expect of full-fledged proverbs". Developing this, he makes the valuable suggestion that "A Tilley-like Dictionary devoted to folklore and superstition would be a useful tool". He notes that Tilley's forms of entry have misled editors to describe as proverbial statements which are better regarded as original formulations of ancient ideas, and that they can also "encourage our missing something actually proverbial". Dates, too, are "a problem ignored or slighted by many Arden editors (grossly by a few)". Too often, indeed, editors at many levels, from that of the graduate dissertation upwards, finding an entry in Tilley vaguely corresponding to something in their text, have been content to note "proverbial" without adequate consideration of whether the passage was truly proverbial at the time of its composition. Sometimes "the only cited examples outside Shakespeare may merely be echoes"; and in "an age of plectruses it is frequently difficult, or impossible, to identify what Tilley called 'independent instances of the same thought'". Dent finds Tilley over-inclusive of Shakespeare citations, and warns that he sometimes cites Shakespeare for one relevant entry when another may be of considerably greater interest". Dent himself "excludes citations that are literal applications of something

proverbial only when figurative", but I think he misses a few figurative applications. For instance, at *Troilus and Cressida* 4.2.34, Cressida says jokingly of Pandarus "Would he were knocked [i]n' head!". Editors, to the best of my belief, do not annotate; but *OED* (not citing *Troilus*) defines "knock in the head" as "to stun or kill by a blow on the head", to kill in any summary way" with an instance from *Thyestes* (c. 1537). This seems to go far enough beyond the literal to merit inclusion.

The major part of this book is its Appendix A: well over 200 pages listing the proverbs themselves. They are keyed to Tilley, but decimal points added to about a quarter of them indicate that these are additions to Tilley and, many of them, to the *Oxford Dictionary* (typically alluded to here as "O'D", though *OED* is the standard abbreviation). There are many interesting additions, such as L. 54.1, "No land there is that can this land abdue, if we agree within ourselves, and to our realm are true", lines stated in 1569 to be proverbial which are remarkably close to the concluding couplet of Shakespeare's *King John*. Some of the additions are sparsely illustrated; for instance, if it is worth including "Tongue and heart (Voussous contrasted)". It is surely worth citing Hamlet's "But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue" and, in *Richard II*, "What my tongue dares not, that my heart shall say".

Professor Dent's notes show a proper concern for the editorial im-

plications of his findings: thus, adding the phrase "To pierce a hog's head" he deduces from its various uses that "there is apparently no reason to believe, with John Crow and the Arden editor of *Love's Labour's Lost* that 'piercing a hog's head' was slang for getting drunk". And in a note on Tilley's W85, "All the water in the sea cannot wash out this stain", he cites a remarkable parallel to *Macbeth* from certain meditations on Christ's passion once attributed to Saint Bernard... addressed to Pilate: "Well might a little water clear the spots of thy hands, but all the water in the Ocean could not wash away the blots of thy soul". It is a defect of Dent's method that one cannot always be sure which of the additional contributions are his own. And it seems a perversity that in this Appendix the phrase "cf. Appendix B" normally means not as one might have expected, that this entry will also be found there, but that it will not; for Appendix B "lists phrases that can be called proverbial as legitimately, or illegitimately, as those in Appendix A labeled 'cf. Appendix B'". Because they do not appear in Tilley, they are not included in the Index. There is also an Appendix C, which lists exclusions from Tilley's Shakespeare Index not "eited legitimately elsewhere in this Index".

Professor Dent lacks Wilson's clarity of exposition. His book takes some mastering and even then is not easy to use. But it repays the effort, and is an indispensable addition to the reference shelf of Shakespeare scholars.

In a manner of speaking

By Pat Rogers

N. F. BLAKE:
Non-Standard Language in English Literature
217pp. André Deutsch. £10.95 (paperback, £5.95).
0 233 97311 7

This book was originally planned while the late Simeon Potter was editor of the Language Library. In some ways it belongs more to Potter's world than to that of his successor, David Crystal. N. F. Blake takes a descriptive, diachronic approach, without elaborate theoretical forays. His book is principally a contribution to the history of language, under the aspect of literary usage, rather than an essay in stylistics. The coverage extends from the Middle Ages to the present (Weaker and Bond; Nalopoul and Soyinka), progressing through the familiar staging-posts, with chapters on the Romantics, the Victorians, and so on. On the whole the novel comes off best, with poetry least fully treated.

Blake shows how a sort of conventional Mummerstet evolved, whereby authors could place speech as Doric or low-class without the use of a carefully localized dialect. He traces the origins of comic Cockney, and demonstrates how often writers have used spelling-dislocations (with no obvious phonetic equivalences) to indicate departures from received usage. In fact, social registers have been marked off by syntax or vocabulary more rarely than one would have supposed. Pronunciation is the usual index of non-standard speech in literature; on the evidence collected here, and most of that "inaccurately" recorded, as a phonologist would see it. Here and there the discussion teeters on the edge of a grotesque speculation ("The Heart of Midlothian is an important novel because it contains more varieties of dialect than that spoken in the Edinburgh region"), but generally Blake remembers that it is, after all, literature which constitutes his material.

The fullest and most satisfactory coverage is accorded to Skelton, medieval and Tudor drama, Smollett, Scott, Emily Brontë and certain of the contemporary authors. Mr Blake seems to envisage a well-informed

but not necessarily widely read audience. Thus, he considers it necessary to rehearse the plot of "The Reeve's Tale" in full detail, whilst assuming that readers can cope with palatal *i*, fronted vowels, apophyses and IPA symbols. Another successful section deals with Kipling, both schoolboy slang and Anglo-Indian lingo serving the author's purposes well.

Amazingly, there appears to have been no manual in this area before. Blake therefore deserves congratulation for opening up an important topic: the work has a useful reference function (with an index of non-standard forms cited), and clearly this will be a pioneering venture.

Unavoidably, a short book on a large theme has its omissions, and these are distressingly obvious in places. Dunbar is quickly despatched, because the Scottish Chaucerians "had little influence on later English literature". Ben Jonson is excused, just almost entirely, with nothing on his major plays, even *Bartholomew Fair* with its parodies of puritanical (and other) jargon. Similarly, "writers like Bunyan were too deeply immersed in the language of the Bible to experiment with language of a more colloquial kind" - a strange judgment, and anyway who are the writers like Bunyan? Lord Foppington's longish style is analysed with no apparent awareness of the Franchised chatter

of his original, Sir Fopling Flutter. (And Farquhar is another absentee.)

When we reach the nineteenth century, the Romantic poets soon give place to Maria Edgeworth. The assertion that "Only North and South" uses the setting of a mill-town, (whereas) Mrs Oskell's other novels are set in more genteel localities" implies ignorance of *Mary Barton*. In this area *Shirley* would have made an interesting foil to *Wuthering Heights*. Dickens is represented by Cockney speech, with no mention of such things as the *flâneur* drawl (Verisopit, Wrayburn) or even the cod Jewish *Gentilichkeit* of Fagin. Thackeray is briefly mentioned as a

purveyor of Snob usages, but there is no analysis of the range of Crawley language or the Hanoverian parodies. Stevenson is another regrettable omission. There is something of a dialect in *George Eliot* and Hardy, although *Blade* is not mentioned. *Leaves* out of the most sensitive appraisal of this topic - that by Patricia Ingham in *Literary English* since *Shakespeare* (edited by George Watson, 1970).

Selectiveness is, I acknowledge, inevitable. What causes more concern is evidence that some texts appear to have been deguiled linguistically without having been properly read. Here is Blake on *Nostromo*:

... There are several Italian who use the odd Italian expression or even occasionally an archaism... Words like *avanti*, *padrona*, *casa* and *misericordia divina* appear in their speech. Similarly, because the novel is set in South America, the occasional Spanish word is found, and Martin Decoud uses French expressions.

This is wildly misleading. Apart from the hero and the family at the Casa Viola, Italians hardly enter the text, and the language is confined to a few brief segments. Spanish occurs on hundreds of occasions throughout, since the novel is in some measure a study of the aftermath of empire.

Some of the omissions noted are remedied by monographs elsewhere in the Language Library. It is also fair to add that there is a chapter on Shakespeare, with Henry V and *The Merry Wives* at the centre of attention. The latter is singled out because of the speech used by Sir Hugh Evans and Dr Caius. "Throughout the rest of Shakespeare's output", we are told, "there is little non-standard English." It rather depends what you mean by that phrase. The limitations of a linguistic approach which ignores Falstaff do not need emphasis. If the most extraordinary prose in English, ignored or dismissed according to vocabulary or syntax (I think it can, to some degree), then we must look at the combinations of words: the accumulations, climaxes, duplications, suspensions and reversals. Such matters can be handed over to the student of rhetoric, but it is an area where one might hope that the philologist will come to the aid of the stylistician. N. F. Blake's book provides a useful start, but there is a great deal more to be done.

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BODLEY HEAD

commentary

Stepney scarecrow

By Jon Silkin

Rosenberg in the Trenches
BBC Radio

Rosenberg in the Trenches, a forty-five minute play by Frederick Bradnum, with music by Humphrey Searle, is neither a drama nor a theatrical event; it suffers, even with the chuckling sardonic voice of David Suchet as Rosenberg, from an overdose of both information and naturalism. Rosenberg was a "Tolstoyan" soldier of the First World War, a war that destroyed him on April 1, 1918. Inevitably Bradnum and his producer can only give us a version of that war, but it is done as if to make palatable with the dubious coating of naturalism a less entertaining substance – that of the austere robust genius of Rosenberg. In so doing Bradnum overlays a considerable part of Rosenberg's strange blend of richness and austerity, the heroic and the sardonic.

The device that Bradnum uses to make Rosenberg spill the beans about his background and his latest attitudes is the simple one of the imminence of death through war. We hear the noise of shelling, Humphrey Searle's war-like music, and Rosenberg's stoic reconstruction of his vicissitudes. We hear him pondering his Jewishness, his family, and in particular his father (there is no warrant in the letters for such an emphasis), his experience as an art-student in the Slade School before the War, his relations with the three Jewish ladies who paid for him to go there, and his equally touchy but more controlled relationship with Edward Marsh. Rosenberg remembers Hulme, the imagist and aesthete who, at the Café Royal, looked over Rosenberg's head – physically and metaphorically. And this reminds him of the scarecrow appearance of the regiment in which he first trained – the Bantams – a regiment for small men who confronted an inspecting General with a scurrying sample of Britain's fighting force. Rosenberg also takes a robust view of Ezra

Pound who advises Rosenberg to enlist. Rosenberg (rightly) suspects that Pound is anti-semitic and contemptuous of the "lower depths" from which Rosenberg has emerged – in fact "Stepney East". These and other speculations are substantiated, and stitched together, by quotations from Rosenberg's and Pound's letters, and this is the most provident and successful aspect of Bradnum's programme.

Rosenberg also muses on the moral vision of the Jews, and the uneducated moral vision of his English working-class context. This may or may not be true to life, but it is given an absolute character which is unexceptionable and which, in his poems and letters, Rosenberg did not voice. Bradnum is right to catch the arrogance which is a part of Rosenberg's complex character; he is wrong to attribute to him superciliousness, though Rosenberg's stoic good-humour is well caught.

Yet the tone of Rosenberg's "performed" voice seems wrong. He is gingerly given a bit of cockney, and a kind of fruity granular tone which does not accurately reflect other more important constituents of his character. The essential poise, the robustness, the touchiness, and the gleeful sense of comedy – even of misfortune – are obscured by Suchet's almost mellow philosophizing. Yet these elements are crucial to a fuller understanding of Rosenberg's nature. Even so, the picture of the man and poet is sympathetic and lively; and the right balance between Rosenberg's view of himself as Jew and as Englishman is achieved.

Three poems are heard – "Break of Day in the Trenches", "Dead Man's Dump", and "Returning, we hear the larks". The first and third are set to music, and because the music makes the poems hard to catch they are immediately afterwards spoken (dramatized) in a mode that does not suit their own intrinsic music. As a drama the work has little trajectory, and in seeking to convey the abrupt termination of the "half-used life" the play itself ends abruptly. Surely this, too, is a mistake of naturalism.

False evidence

By Carol Rumens

A Coat of Varnish
Theatre Royal, Haymarket

First published in 1979, C. P. Snow's novel *A Coat of Varnish* is set in the long, hot and disturbingly un-English summer of 1976. Cricket fans go on the rampage in Belgrave and when, a few days later, Lady Ashbrook is murdered in her drawing room in Ayleston Square, it seems to symbolize a threat, from within as well as from without, to upper middle-class society. An investigation, not just of the crime but of human behaviour, is set in motion as Snow explores the individuals of a group of concerned individuals, among them Humphrey Leigh, an ex-secretary, and Frank Briers, chief superintendent on the case, and Dr Perryman, who turns out to be number one suspect. All are gifted, successful and privileged men, occasionally capable of radical ideas within the limits of their professional roles, and possessing, in some measure, what Snow calls "pragmatism of the soul". Their motivations, with its mixture of vanity and idealism, is what really interests Snow, and enables him to transcend with real moral seriousness the "whodunnit" mechanics of his plot.

Much of this subtlety is lost in Ronald Miller's stage version. Technically accomplished and with long experience of dramatising Snow's fiction, Miller draws on certain possibilities suggested by the text and recreates, within the limits of a single set,

Postscript: INLAND 154p, ARNOLD 17p



"Wohr dich, wehr dich, wach auf" by Ludwig Hohlwein: a recruiting poster for the Bavarian Reichswehr, from the exhibition Conflict and Stability: European Graphics 1917-22 at the Imperial War Museum until May 31.

Imaginative truths

By Nirad C. Chaudhuri

Indian Monuments through British Eyes, 1780-1980
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

The University of Cambridge has made a contribution to the current Festival of India which, though small, is both relevant and charming. It is an exhibition of British watercolours, prints and photographs of the monuments, sculptures, landscapes and human scenes of India. It runs until April 25. The core of the exhibits is formed by thirty aquatints by the Daniels, Thomas the uncle and William the nephew. These are from the six volumes of the collection *Oriental Scenery*, which were published from 1795 to 1803. There are also prints from the books of description and travel by Blagden, Fitzmaurice, Forrest and others, as well as two water-colours by Lauder.

The old prints belong to a remarkable artistic tradition which arose in the late nineteenth century and continued well into the twentieth until the brush was displaced by the camera. They were products of an exotic projection of the English romantic search for the picturesque. What Lady Hester Stanhope was to travel the world, he was to paint; the latter's venture was as arduous and enterprising as travel, but more productive in the legacy it left. In those days of movement only by animal and human labour these men went from one end of India to another – from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from Calcutta to Bombay, to make drawings of nearly all the famous and important monuments, both Hindu and Muslim. The emotional urge which made them do this must have been overpowering. They did indeed show the Indian monuments as seen through British eyes, but those eyes had the European vision, and behind the eyes stood the European spirit. That was

why they could depict India both truthfully and imaginatively, which is beyond the capacity of Hinduizing Occidentals.

It was not, however, the professional painters alone who depicted India in this manner. The amateurs predominated, and they were soldiers, officials, clergymen, and the young misses who took to drawing in order to become socially "accomplished" in their own circles. Their technical capacity was in no way below that of the professionals. Ever Bishop Heber made some beautiful drawings which were reproduced in a quarto accompanying his *Journals*.

The works exhibited are important both historically and artistically. If anyone wants to know what the great monuments of India looked like at the end of the eighteenth century they will not be able to do without these prints, which succeed in embodying the authentic historical atmosphere, and have not become mere archaeological records. The capacity shown in putting across the visual and emotional aura of the monuments was remarkable. The same painter, say Thomas Daniell, would seem to belong to different schools as he painted Hindu or Muslim monuments. In the pictures of Ellora and Elephanta, for instance, the solidity, stateliness and mystery of the Hindu vision are as truly conveyed as are the airiness, dynamism and grace of the spirit animating the Muslim monuments. None the less, from the purely artistic point of view, the style of the paintings and of the prints made after them is wholly European. That is what makes them important in the history of European art.

The colour photographs by Raymond Allchin, apart from their merit as examples of photography, are useful as pictorial glosses on the views of the whole seen in the prints. They furnish the details which naturally could not be put in the views, though the picture by Daniell of the scene of Arjuna's penance at Mahabalipuram is as telling a view as that in any photograph.

commentary

Black Will and Shakebag

By Stephen Wall

Arden of Faversham
The Other Place, Stratford
Macbeth
Royal Shakespeare Theatre

The new Stratford season has made a murderous start with the not often performed *Arden of Faversham* at its small-scale theatre and a new *Macbeth* in the main house. The *Romans in Britain* trial has not deterred the Royal Shakespeare Company from simulating several acts of gross homicide, but of course blank verse is always sanitizing. In fact, in Terry Hands's production of *Arden* (last revived by the RSC in 1970), it is more a matter of attempted homicide for much of the play. It is clear from the first few minutes that Arden's wife Alice wants him dead and it soon transpires that there are other aggrieved parties who would be glad to see the Kentish landowner put away, but it is not until the end of the piece that the long-awaited deed is finally brought off. If the murder is not "done quickly", in Macbeth's phrase, it is not for want of trying, and much of the play's very considerable fascination lies in seeing how long Arden's apparently charmed life will hold out, given the extreme inefficiency of those who are trying to do him in. *Arden of Faversham*'s text-book reputation as the first English domestic tragedy hardly prepares one for the theatrical tension between the thrillerish excitement of a constantly expected act of violence continually postponed, and the bathetically comic side-effects of such delays.

Alice wants to get rid of her husband because she fancies Mosby, despite – or perhaps because of – his social inferiority. Mosby was formerly a butcher (that is, a tailor whose business is with the shreds and patches that Hamlet speaks of so scornfully), and his collusion with Alice involves some appropriately clumsy schemes. When it comes to poisoned pictures and crucifixes, the English at this Elizabethan stage are clearly bungling amateurs compared with the refined Italians of later Jacobean plays. The lovers' ineffectuality, however, is put into the shade by the repeatedly abortive attempts to kill Arden made by Black Will and Shakebag; as Mosby exasperatedly exclaims, "These knaves will never do it". This accident-prone pair of hit-men have a demonic vitality that is splendidly realized in this production by John Bove and David Bradley. Their energy needs to be allowed full expression but it must be kept from upsetting the balance of the play. The limited dimensions of the Other Place permit tight audience control, and Terry Hands succeeds very well in integrating what can easily become so anarchic double act with a prevailing climate of menace and unease. Black Will and Shakebag emanate from a criminal underworld that has its funny side but which is also genuinely terrifying; their capacity to turn nasty is powerfully demonstrated by their violent treatment of Arden's servant Mielage, who is terrorized into complicity. One of the director's most striking effects is to retain Michael on stage after his nightmare vision of the thugs to enter the house to get at Arden – an effect strengthened by having the actors prowling round and speaking outside the auditorium itself, thus immuring the audience too.

Hands also makes a powerful scene out of another potentially farcical episode, when Black Will and Shakebag get lost in the mist, and the latter falls in a ditch; getting soaked. Dry ice is often wafted about indiscriminately in modern productions, but here this admittedly un-Elizabethan resource is legitimately used so that it not only keeps the comedy in bounds but also gives an enigmatic impressiveness to the Ferryman, who appears mysteriously out of the fog like some ancient analogue of the Weird Sisters transferred to the Isle of Sheppey. The Ferryman's earlier remarks to Arden about his own wife being "as other women are... governed by the moon" are in this light, no rather half-light, transposed from standard Elizabethan sexist gags to a more gnomic level of suggestiveness, con-

trasting with the sexual motivations at the heart of the action as a whole. A further bonus is that scholarly murmurs about Cheron do not seem as far-fetched as a bare reading of the text might suggest.

Black Will and Shakebag are allowed to raise laughs but not to become lovable, and this is appropriate to a dramatic world where none is. The "domesticity" which is the basis of *Arden of Faversham*'s reputation is made highly convincing by the room-like scale of The Other Place itself, a scale which also serves to deny the characters the more heroic pretensions which their rhetoric sometimes suggests but which their conduct belies. It is true that this production is not at ease with those aspects of the play's language – not in themselves very remarkable – which most obviously relate it to its original date around 1590. What seems rather to happen here is that the characters use their more Senecan or Kydian moments as if trying to convince themselves of their claim to a level of experience which their essential mediocrity undermines. The plot itself derives from ordinary life (as the original audience well knew), being based on an actual murder committed in 1551, and it has the combination of violence and banality which would have interested an Elizabethan Simonson.

Arden himself is an aggressive acquirer of land, and the class conflicts both within and implied by the play could be and indeed have been heavily stressed – an emphasis which the eclectic RSC-house-style costume rather blurs. But apart from such representativeness as Arden himself may now be taken to have, there is nothing about him to make his death special. Bruce Purchase gives the part a strong physical presence but is not able to suggest any particular coherence behind Arden's odd alternations of suspicion and credulity, or over-bearingness muted by sudden patches of depression. Such oscillations of mood appear more as part of a dream-like arbitrariness in the way things fall out in this play. No one is strong enough to control a muddled sequence of events that only comes to seem a logical series because it leads to a fatal conclusion. Similarly, Alice's lover Mosby may

be attractive to her for at least part of the time (there's an interesting scene of morning-after disenchantment and recrimination), but he is obviously a deeply second-rate person. Michael's predicament as an involuntary accomplice is persuasively registered by Mark Rylance, but his immaturity and inadequacy are hopelessly exposed by events.

In so far as this concatenation of incompetence has a centre it is to be found in Alice Arden. Jenny Agutter



Sir Henry Irving as Macbeth dying on stage in a production at the Lyceum in 1889. Engraving from The Graphic by J. Nash.

seely conveys the kind of glamour hovering between the class and the cheap, that is right for the role, but she does not make a powerfully tragic affect in it. Indeed, her performance might be thought shallow, but then the part is shallow. The instability and apogee of Alice's emotions are essentially signs of her residual superficiality. Jenny Agutter hasn't the vocal resources which a few years' experience of Shakespearean heroines might have developed, but her cinematic ability to sustain close-up and in particular her expressive use of the eyes make her interpretation plausible in The Other Place's intimate conditions. Her Alice is clearly a woman whom it is dangerous to know, partly because she doesn't know herself. She prides herself on an apparently quick-witted power of improvisation which sees her through some tricky moments, but which is really a symptom of her basic lack of intelligence. It would overbalance the play to give this essentially flimsy person too great an intensity; its author was clearly a dramatist of great promise but he wasn't Middleton; around 1590 no-one was.

All the same, this production makes it clear that *Arden of Faversham* is something much more interesting than primitive homily. The playwright's attitude to the characters is not so much censorious as phlegmatic. All of them can count on a certain attentiveness as their common situation overwhelms them. The scene in which Arden is finally dispatched while playing Mosby at backgammon appears to have been a famous one (the 1633 quarto illustrates it), and it must certainly be one of the first to exploit the possibilities of the on-stage indoor game. But equally remarkable is the way the dramatist charts the reactions in crisis of each character, so that the general panic and stupidity that set in are presented with an impartiality that seems genuinely humane rather than relatively judicial. The effect of this climax is forcefully underlined by Nigel Hess's music. Synthesizer tremolo has accompanied moments of dream-like disquiet and foreboding throughout, and a clarinet motif intensifies the intermittent suggestion of *film noir* tension. This imaginative

use of sound is characteristic of a production that may appear to neglect academic points but which nevertheless releases the theatrical energy authentically latent in the text. The play's curious impersonality as well as its formal anonymity have sometimes been abused by doctrinaire directors, but Terry Hands has shown it a properly creative kind of respect.

Oddly enough, Howard Davies's new production of *Macbeth* is conceived in terms which might pass as intriguingly revisionist in a small-scale venue like The Other Place, but which are disconcertingly inadequate to the larger demands of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre itself. The forestage now has two levels of seats at the sides, and the depth of the stage behind the proscenium is limited by a transverse gantry providing an upper level and space for two percussionists and their batteries. This reminiscence of Peter Brook's *Midsummer Night's Dream* fits in with the director's determined policy of demystification. The lighting is mostly bright and flat, props are minimal, and there is no attempt at special effects – no dry ice in this house. But the empty space has to be filled with something if it is not to become limbo, and playing against expectation will only work if the alternatives offered earn their own rewards. Expectation in this case is bound to be coloured by the RSC's own 1976 Nunn-McKellan version, widely acknowledged as a production of reference quality and an extra incentive to Howard Davies and his cast to find new solutions.

The first of these is the abandonment of any attempt to impersonate the witches as bearded, skinny-lipped hags, withered and wild in their attire. They appear as a trio of neat, tidy, not to say buxom, girls who speak their charms in a fractured counterpoint which conveys not the slightest frisson of supernaturalism. This is a *Macbeth* in which the spirits that tend on mortal thoughts have become a marginal consideration; it is hard to imagine a version of the play with less sense of metaphysical implication. This perfunctoryness would not matter so much if the political and dynastic elements of the play had not been so miserably flattened out. When Macduff asks Ross, "Scotland stands where it doth, he seems to be talking of a far-off country of which we know little."

The general reductionism is most evident in the way Bob Peck's daring and misguided interpretation of the title role. His Macbeth is a man without much imagination or largeness of mind, practical rather than speculative, physically energetic, cunningly managerial in his handling of inferiors, genially dismaying with his equals, inhumanly military, fundamentally not too bright. When he remarks that life is a tale told by an idiot, you feel that this is what he has always thought, really. It signifies nothing now, and never signified that much. It is thus logical that Peck's last Act should be his best. His cat-and-mouse fight with Young Seward makes the posthumous description of him as a dead butcher seem for once entirely appropriate. When he notes that he has almost forgot the taste of fear, he appears to congratulate himself on having suppressed full of horrors; if turned out to be a good policy. And as for lacking honour, love, obedience, troops of friends – well, you can't have everything. The whole Birnam Wood – "Dunsinane business is quite a joke in its way. If the grim kind of when it turns out that the joke is on him, this Macbeth accepts the fact with some courage and doesn't seem over-concerned about the witches' equivocation. No doubt it's what one should have expected.

But if a certain sense is made of

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Macbeth's situation, and a certain freshness of stress given to some of the lines, it is brought at a price which is crimping evidence in the early scenes. In particular, it is astonishing how little the murder of Duncan is made to count. Macbeth's indecision over the deed, his reluctance to perform it, his regret at having done it, are given so much of-factly that you would think that regicide was all in a day's work. The horror of the act so powerfully insisted on in the poetry is not communicated because this Macbeth does not have the sensibility to understand the language he uses. The great speeches are not exactly thrown away, but they are rattled through so that only their surface sense gets across. The self-consciousness of Macbeth's manner of visibly thinking along the line from one image to the next, taking in shades of meaning on the way, has been abandoned, along with any attempt at a heroic timbre of voice.

It is no surprise, therefore, that Sara Kestelman's Lady Macbeth, strongly and even at times irritably delivered, similarly fails to move. Her "Unsex me here" is commanding, but does not strike one as an injunction appallingly against nature. The one moment that is genuinely affecting is when she breaks down into dry sobs in the sleep-walking scene - a moment that is revealing between the words rather than a direct result of them. The rela-

tionship of husband and wife is plausibly domestic although they seem to lack the intimacy of a couple who haven't all that much in common apart from a strong mutual interest in his career. This may be the reason why the embarrasments of the banquet scene are successfully registered; it is clearly one of those important dinner-parties which turn out to be absolute disasters. Both Peck's aggressive turning on the (invisible) ghost of Banquo is of a piece with his usual readiness to take the initiative; in a nice point of staging, Lady Macbeth actually sits in Banquo's chair to prove to Macbeth that there's nothing there.

But despite such moments of attack, the regional plainness of this Macbeth's exposition cannot but leave many of its depths unplumbed, and it is after all a play of depths. It is one thing to refuse to milk such celebrated passages as the "If we should fail? We fail?" sequence, so that they pass almost unnoticed. It is another to carry such de-familiarization to the point of devaluation. Interpretations radically at variance with the nature of Shakespeare's language in a given play are bound to seem unrooted; the language is obviously our best guide to what happens, in all its complexity. The rough-shod insensitivity to the verse shown in this production makes Macbeth look like the sort of play that the author of *Arden of Feversham* might have written, fifteen years on.

Author, Author

Competition No 66
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office no later than May 7. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers to be opened, or failing that the most nearly correct - in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, Times Literary Supplement, PO Box 7, New Printing House Square, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1N 3BZ. The solution and results will appear on May 14.

1 Sir John Suckling invented the game of Cribbage. He sent his Cards to all Gaming places in the country, which were marked with private marks of his; he got twenty thousand pounds by this way.

2 We see we cannot play at chess but that we must give names to our chessmen; and yet, methinks, he were a very partial champion of truth that would say we lied for giving a piece of wood, the reverend title of a bishop.

3 Whilst, sir, said Mr Petry, you know, was a court game originally;

"Writing '82" - the Fifth Lancaster Literature Festival, which runs from April 26 to May 3 - takes up the theme of censorship. There will be luncheon screenings of television material which has been banned or criticized as inappropriate for broadcasting: *Death of a Princess* by Antony Thoms, the film of *Scum* and *Curious Jonney* by Kenneth

and the knave, I suppose, signified always the prime minister.

Competition No 62

Answers:

1 Brahms, for all his grumbling and grizzling, had never guessed what it felt like to be suspected of stealing an umbrella.

E. M. Forster, *Howards End*, chapter 5.

2 Straddling her 'cello between her distressing legs, she ground out a sonata by Brahms, a clumsy composer whose work I could never care for.

L. P. Hartley, *Eustace and Hilary*, chapter 17.

3 "I should certainly not go near the Albert Hall if I were you, Edgar," he said. "It would be too great a risk. Someone might seize you and compel you to listen to Brahms. In fact, after the way you have been talking this evening, you would probably yield to temptation and enter of your own free will. I would not trust you with such a risk as Brahms is concerned, Edgar. Not at all."

Anthony Powell, *Casualty's*, chapter 1.

Griffith, who will also take part in a Censorship Forum on Thursday, April 29. Also on the panel will be Robert Hewison, Colin McCabe and Peter Watkins, director of the banned anti-nuclear film *The War Game*. Full details may be obtained from Street, Bennett-Goodman, 69 Church Street, Lancaster LA1 1ET; tel: 0524 62166.

Behind the lines

One of the less well-known codes of practice of the Publishers' Association is a system devised to divert would-be authors who turn up at their Bedford Square front door, hoping that the PA will assist in publishing their manuscripts. Since the arrival of misguided authors is a more frequent occurrence than you would expect, this code remains confidential.

Outsiders bearing bundles of foolscap labelled in green ink might well assume that the PA had something to do with publishing, but on closer investigation the terms of reference of this key institution for the business of books prove hard to define. It has existed since 1896 to enforce a restrictive practice. Its membership, nearly 400 firms, represents ninety-five per cent of the turnover of British publishing, yet its chief executive, Clive Bradley, says "the PA has no real power." It may however be that the PA has no power where it chooses not to exercise it.

Publishers are notoriously the most secretive and suspicious businessmen, and as a trade association the PA has to balance the collective interests of the industry against the mutual competition of its members. It is very much in the collective interest to sustain the Net Book Agreement, the formally acknowledged restrictive practice that brought the PA into being. Most authors and booksellers, as well as publishers, agree that a fixed retail price for a book is the only way to arrange sensible dealings between themselves and the public. But the Commissioners of the European Community take a different view, since the practice is in direct conflict with the rules of free competition. The announcement that the EEC has started another investigation of "competition in the book trade" has the PA worried.

The European Commission is what Clive Bradley calls a "governmental" problem, and he is pleased with the results of the PA's recent annual general meeting, which has led to the creation of a new, powerful committee, the Public Affairs Advisory Panel. Under the chairmanship of Graham C. Greene, of Jonathan Cape Ltd, the panel will advise the PA's Council on its government and social relations. It will look to the PA's image, and make sure that its voice is heard in Westminster and Brussels. (Since the senior figures of British publishing have always had a comfortable relationship with the British Establishment, this merely formalizes the PA's usual practice.) The PA will defend publishing interests in Europe; at home it takes action against xeroxing infringers of copyright, and further abroad it is campaigning hard against book pirates in India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Malaysia.

Yet this purposeful image of the Publishers' Association has a tendency to dissolve when other issues are pressed. The PA may have encouraged its members to appoint Piracy Officers, but according to Bradley, it "is not a body for the control of the ethics of publishing." This has

proved a frustrating attitude for at least two groups of workers in the industry: the book-editor members of the NUJ, and members of the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild. Both groups have tried this year to get the PA to take some responsibility for the industrial attitudes of its members but - with the exception of the Warehouse Employers' Committee which negotiates rates for warehousemen with SOGAT - the PA resolutely refuses to negotiate national agreements.

As far as authors are concerned, the PA says it views the demand by writers' organisations for minimum terms for book contracts with "considerable concern." This is not because it might mean having to pay authors more money, but because it might make it too costly to publish books with marginal expectations. "No one," says Bradley "wants to be thought of as someone who oppresses authors." Since it is acknowledged that some contractual clauses prove onerous, the PA has offered to draw up a Code of Practice for its members, which will not say anything about money, but which will advise on the vexed questions of how to reject a commissioned manuscript, or cancel the publication of a book. In the meantime the PA will not discuss improving terms for authors, since its members do not wish it to. After all, one might add, why should the PA as a confederation do what its members are very reluctant to do individually?

The Publishers' Association, then, does not exist to regulate the publishing industry or control most of the commercial practices of its members. But the hard edge of this voluntary, powerless body re-emerges when it comes to exploiting a new situation. Assuming that the Public Lending Right Scheme passed through the House of Lords next week, money resulting from lending library loans will begin to flow to authors in the Autumn of 1983. As it stands, authors are the only beneficiaries of the scheme, but the PA takes the view that since an author's lost royalties in libraries are also a publisher's lost sales, publishers are entitled to a share of PLR money. The PA's annual report advises that this can be obtained by acting as the author's agent for PLR, or by taking a share of future PLR money through the author's contract. Contracts which assign a portion of an author's right in PLR to the publisher are already in operation, and it is possible that this hard won reward will become no more than another subsidiary right to be bargained over.

It may be just as well that would-be authors who arrive at Bedford Square are gently recommended to go elsewhere.

In two weeks' time the Arts Council's Literature Department will announce a joint publishing venture with Secker and Warburg. The invitation to the party are already out, but the Literature Department won't say what the scheme involves. Is it a step towards the National Publishing House that Literature Director Charles Osborne has trailed from time to time as a smoke screen across the activities of his department? Probably not; more likely it is part of a plan to bring "neglected classics" back into circulation. Neglected contemporaries please note.

What is English Literature, anyway? Two contributors to the first number of a new journal called *LTP (Literature Teaching Politics)* offer an ingenious answer: English Literature is what the Schools Examinations Boards say it is. *LTP* number one has been pub-

lished to coincide with the this annual "Literature Teaching Politics" conference, held this year at Birmingham University at the beginning of April. Out to expose the ideological use of English Literature as the moral centre of the school curriculum, Holly Goulden and John Finley have analysed the O, D/A and A-Level syllabuses set by the eleven Examinations Boards in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The result is a remarkable league table, a sort of pedagogic pantheon.

The analysts admit that their method - counting up the number of times an author or text is mentioned in the thirty-eight syllabuses examined - is a little rough and ready, but their conclusion is that English Literature is the product of 166 authors, plus a more shadowy group of contributors to twenty-five anthologies. Shakespeare W. towers over the rest with 190 mentions, his nearest rival, Chaucer G. only has fifty-six, with Hardy T. close behind at fifty-four. The first living writer comes in at fourteenth place, Golding W. with twenty.

Goulden and Hartley divide their authors into three categories. The Exalted (and mainly out of copyright), the top seventeen who gain more mentions than the rest of English Literature put together; the Respected which includes a number of living writers (Bolt R., thirteen, Betjeman J., twelve, Osborne J., nine, Stoppard T., six, Naipaul V. S., five), and the Token Gesture. These last "represent categories otherwise absent altogether, like women, blacks, Americans, people who are alive, radicals, foreigners." (Soylark W., three, Drabble M., one, Churchill W. S., one.) Ideology apart, the league table suggests some curious literary evaluations. Betjeman is as important as Donne, and more important than Auden (five), who is less significant than Charles Causley (nine), but as good as Larkin.

Lord of the Flies of course accounts for William Golding's very high placing in the pantheon, but his position is about to be challenged by a separate article Simon Dalglish informs us that Richard Adams's *Waterbury Down* has just joined the London O-Level syllabus. "Animal allegory plays a central strategic role in the text's ideological framing of femininity."

Where poetry is concerned such things are never trivial, for poetry and fact go together, and in the present and critical climate of "Poetry" it is especially satisfying to enjoy them together.

Observing that the facts about Cummings's life, so abundantly presented in Richard S. Kennedy's biography, "have no relation to the poet and his poetry", I was implying (contrast with the kind of poet (Cummings, Byron, Whitman) whose life is not only present in their poems but tells us important things about them. In the case of Cummings, as in that of John Crowe Ransom, there seemed to me no such close relation, but in retrospect I agree with Peter Dickinson (March 19). The point should have been more clear, and in any case it could be argued that a negative relation between a poet's life and work has as much significance as a positive one.

JOHN BAYLEY.

St Catherine's College, Oxford.

The White Hotel

Sir, - Years ago I noticed that some poems by D. M. Thomas, now before us again as a novel, were introduced in a delectably peculiar way. They had "revolved from myths suggested by science-fiction stories by Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Tom Godwin, Damon Knight and James H. Schmitz, to whom grateful acknowledgement is made". Now, in *The White Hotel*, D. M. Thomas "graciously acknowledges" actual lifts from *Babi Yar*, as well as from the writings and letters of Freud. Perhaps some kind investigator will now discover for us exactly how much is lifted in this new method of writing, this plagiarism admitted in advance, which insults literature, makes mugs of publishers and reviewers, and cannot be excused by Mr Thomas's high-souled defence.

GEOFFREY GRIGSON.

Briar Town Farmhouse, Broad Town, Swindon, Wiltshire.

E. E. Cummings

Sir, - I am grateful to Marie Boroff for pointing out (March 26) that the purple finch is a singer, and I revise my impression of Cummings's poem "o purple finch" accordingly. The misunderstanding must be one of nomenclature. The American bird sounds like, and perhaps is, cousin to the European linnet, well known for its song. The finch family, so called in Europe, only chirp or whistle, more or less, as Hardy notes in "Proud Songsters".

The thrushes sing as the sun is going, and the finches whistle in ones and pairs.

Hardy also gives an accurate rendering of the greenfinch in *Far from the Madding Crowd* when Bathsheba wakes in the wood the morning after her parting from Troy. "Chee-wee-wee-wee-wee" from another treat, it was a finch. The eighteenth-century Russian poet Derzhavin wrote a poem on the death of Marshal Suvorov entitled "Snezhik" (The Bullfinch), the soldier's word for the military life, whose wheezy note resembled the bird's. Brodsky recalls this in his own poem on the death of Marshal Zhukov.

Where poetry is concerned such things are never trivial, for poetry and fact go together, and in the present and critical climate of "Poetry" it is especially satisfying to enjoy them together.

Apart from one or two valid points of historical criticism, the review is devoted to attacking Hoggart's moral (egalitarian) commitments. We are told that Oxford was always "socially comprehensive", that Hoggart's republicanism and his criticism of privilege are merely expressions of envy and bad sportsmanship, that nothing could be done about the public schools (they have always been "socially comprehensive" too, no doubt), because the elites would simply set up shop abroad (we would be faced with not only a graduate brain-drain and so export of capital, but also an exportation of secondary schooling!).

George Watson is an abrasive ideologue, posing as a man of down-right good sense. Incongruously, he has chosen as his latest victim a man of quiet conviction and steady principle. Hoggart's trail-blazing *Uses of Literacy* (nothing since has been as good) no doubt established an instant prejudice in Watson's mind; for the first time in modern criticism we heard the voices of a non-establishment culture. Watson's sneering ironies against the "eternal wisdom of the Common Man" are themselves the symptoms of a class antagonism which will become the pages of the TLS (no doubt I will be called sanctimonious for that). His caricature of the history of socialism and his predictable cold-war jibes hardly give the reader grounds for confidence in his judgments of Hoggart's book.

RAMAN SELDEN.

Department of English, University of Durham, Elvet Riverside, New Elvet, Durham.

Bernini in France

Sir, - I refer to Joseph Rykwert's review of my book, *Bernini in France* (March 19). Rykwert's style is not remarkable for clarity, but what I think it all boils down to is that if I were writing my book it would be different.

On the evidence of a remarkable series of howlers which Rykwert managed to include in the limited space of his review I would wholeheartedly agree with this. The rebuilding of the Louvre, for instance, was inaugurated not, as he says, by Henri II but by François I.

STEPHEN WALL is a Fellow of Keble College, Oxford, and editor of *Essays in Criticism*.

to the editor

Austrian National Socialism

Sir, - Bruce F. Pauley (Letters, March 26) finds fault with my review (January 15) of his book, *Hitler and the Forgotten Nazis*, in several grounds. Since I wrote in my own book in 1976 that "comparatively little work has been done" on this subject, a large amount of new work on it has been published by younger Austrian historians, especially Gerhard Botz and Gerhard Jagschitz, so that it is simply not correct to speak of "the Forgotten Nazis". Indeed, a very eminent Austrian historian (not over-looking, of course, the possibility that "quondam" itself, in this sense, might be a corruption of "Aliquando")

MARTIN GREEN.

2377 Devonshire Place NW, Washington, DC 20008.

Epstein Sculptures

Sir, - I must deny Tanya Harrod's report (Commentary, April 2) that I said one of Epstein's sculptures on the old BMA building in the Strand was "obscene".

What I in fact did was refer to the silly controversy of 1908, when some newspapers found the statues "objectionable", as a prelude to the revived controversy of 1937 when the Government of Southern Rhodesia mutilated them. This I did so as to quote Epstein's comments on a letter in his support: "This letter of Sir Edwin Lyttons is grotesque... in view of the fact that this eminent and busy architect has never once even approached me with a request for sculpture during his long life."

I regard those wickedly spoiled sculptures on what is now Zimbabwe House as Epstein's finest work and his being commissioned by Charles Holden, a model example of how an architect should work with an artist.

GAVIN STAMP.

2 St Alphege House, Pocock Street, London SE1.

'Crisis in Africa'

Sir, - Writers should not, in general, complain about critics. But should not reviewers take some trouble to get their facts right, as they expect authors to do?

S. K. Panter-Brick, in his notice on *Crisis in Africa* (February 26), misrepresents my book on at least three key issues:

1. He is sceptical of my version of the events which led Cuba to intervene in Angola and Ethiopia, yet ignores what has since been generally acknowledged - that Cuban intervention did not precede but followed invasions of Angola and Ethiopia by respectively "South African" and "Somalian" forces. He does not make it clear that Cuban civilian help for African (and Asian) countries began in 1960 and continued even through the period when Castroism was an object of simultaneous American, Soviet and Chinese hostility. My argument was that Castro's efforts to evolve a particular Cuban brand of socialism were frustrated by continued US sanctions which forced him ultimately into a reluctant dependence upon the Russians.

2. Mr Panter-Brick alleges that I failed to check Harold Macmillan's famous "wind of change" speech to the Cape Town Parliament, but if he had reached p.195 he would have found that I had quoted the key passage in full. He is also mistaken in asserting that I offered little firm evidence to show that major Western powers contributed financially and technologically to South Africa's advance towards a nuclear weapons capacity.

3. He questions whether Lord Soames really told me in an interview that, if Mugabe had emerged winner of the Rhodesian election in 1980 without an overall majority, it would have been possible for Nkomo and Muzorewa to form a coalition. Yet that is precisely what London

that there never was a Dr Condom, but it does mean that he had to be active rather earlier than 1660. I suspect, however, that in fact there was no Dr Condom, and that the pseudonymously device takes its name somehow from the Latin word "quondam". My working hypothesis is that just as a passage of St. Augustine's dening with contraception is known in canon law as "Aliquando", from the first word of its text, so might there exist some other decreal relating to contraception which begins with, and thus is identified as, "Quondam", or some similar word (not overlooking, of course, the possibility that "quondam" itself, in this sense, might be a corruption of "Aliquando").

This does not necessarily mean

Washington and Pretoria were in fact hoping for, and the transcript of the Soames interview is available for inspection.

The fact that *Crisis in Africa* has been assailed by a few critics reflecting the Establishment views of East and West alike could be seen as an acknowledgment of its balance. More interestingly, though, it has earned a greater number of bouquets than bricks from reviewers less committed than yours.

ARTHUR GAVSHON.

19 Stormont Road, London NW.

Harold Gilman

Sir, - In her review (October 23, 1981) of the exhibition *Harold Gilman 1878-1919* (still on show at the Royal Academy, where the review is displayed) Frances Spalding says that nothing is known of Eleni Zompolides who was the subject of Gilman's painting *The Blue Blouse* owned by Leeds Art Gallery. I can throw some light on this, as she was my mother.

Eleni Zompolides' full name was Eleni Ioanna Djoirina Zompolides. Her father was Greek and her mother Norwegian.

She was herself an artist and studied at the Royal School of Art under Edward Johnston and W. R. Lethaby. She specialized in lettering and illumination and was an early member of the Society of Scribes and Illuminators.

After training she worked with Douglas Cockerell on illuminated books and manuscripts, and did the illuminating and lettering for the Roll of Honour of boys from Eton College who died in World War I. She also worked for Deni's, the publisher, designing the front pages and backs of books in the *Everyman* series. She was an early Socialist and Fabian.

She married Charles Francis Townsend, an analytical chemist, by whom she had four children and ten grandchildren. She died in Leicestershire, in 1958.

RALPH TOWNSEND.

Deni House, Whitby's Lane, Hatfield, Wiltshire.

Nonesuch Press

Sir, - In his generous review (April 2) of *A History of the Nonesuch Press*, Rumi McLean has been inappropriately generous to the Curwen Press, which did not print the book. As stated in the colophon it was printed at the University Press, Cambridge. I must add that the photograph for the jacket which was appropriately praised ought to be credited to the photographic department of Cambridge University Library, and not Cambridge University Press as stated in the review.

JOHN DREYFUS.

38 Lennox Gardens, London SW1.

'God's Playground'

Sir, - May I point out a wrong date of importance in the second paragraph of Hugh Seton-Watson's review (March 19) of Norman Davies's *God's Playground? The territorial date of Poland's history, 1815 to 1918*, not 1815 as there printed.

P. S. FALLA.

63 Freejanda Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 3JZ.

John Raven

Sir, - If any of your readers wish to obtain the book *John Raven: his life and work*, reviewed by Michael Grant in your issue of February 19, I have copies available at £3.50.

FAITH RAVEN.

Doctra's Manor, Shepreth, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 6PS.

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Among this week's contributors

FRANCIS AMES-LEWIS is a lecturer in History of Art at Birkbeck College, London. His *Drawing in Early Renaissance Italy* was published last year.

T. C. BAKAR is Professor of Economic History at the London School of Economics.

ALAN BELL is the Librarian of Rhodes House, Oxford.

MAURICE BLOCH is Reader in Anthropology at the London School of Economics.

C. N. L. BACOKA is the author of *London 800-1216: The Shipping of a City*, 1975.

NIHAD C. CHAUDHURI's books include *Scholar Extraordinary: The Life of Professor Sir R. C. Majumdar*, 1974.

MAX MILLER P. G. 1974.

L. JONATHAN COHEN is a Fellow of The Queen's College, Oxford.

MICHAEL DAVIS is the editor of *The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh*, 1976.

DOUGLAS DUNN's most recent collection of poems is *St Kilda's Paradise*, 1981.

ROY FOSTER's books include *Lord Randolph Churchill: A Political Life*, 1981.

PETER GWYN is writing a biography of Cardinal Wolsey.

GILBERT HARMAN's books include *Thought*, 1973.

ROBERT HAWSON's *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-1980* was published last year.

CHRISTOPHER HILL's books include *Millen and the English Revolution*, 1978.

MICHAEL HOWARD is Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford.

PETER HOWARD is a lecturer in Latin at Bedford College, London. He is the author of *A Commentary on Book J of Marlowe*, 1980.

KEITH JAFFERY is a lecturer in History at the Ulster Polytechnic.

MARTIN KEMP's *Leonardo da Vinci: The Marvelous Works of Nature and Man* was published last year and has been awarded the 1981 Mitchell Prize for the best work in English on the History of Art.

H. G. KÖNNIGSBERGER's books include *Estates and Revolutions*, and *The Habsburgs and Europe 1516-1600*, both 1971.

ANORAW MORTON's long poem *Independence* was published last December.

STEPHEN WALL is a Fellow of Keble College, Oxford, and editor of *Essays in Criticism*.

BRYAN RANFT was Professor of History at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich from 1965 to 1977.

C. J. RAWSON's books include *Gulliver and the Gentle Reader: Studies in Swift and Our Times*, 1973.

J. M. RICHARDS's most recent book is *Goa*, 1982.

PAT ROGERS is the author of *The Augustan Vision*, 1974, and *Henry Fielding: A Biography*, 1979.

PETER RIVIERE is the author of *Marriage Among the Trio*, 1969.

JON SILKIN's books include *Out of Britain: The Poetry of the Great War*, 1972.

STEPHEN WALL is a Fellow of Keble College, Oxford, and editor of *Essays in Criticism*.

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Critics in consort

By C. J. Rawson

P. J. M. ROBERTSON:
The Leavises on Fiction
An Historic Partnership
176pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 353 27886 0

M. B. KINCH:

Q. D. Leavis 1906-1981
An Appreciation
34pp. Bynmill Press, 15 Cobwell
Road, Retford, Notts DN22 7BN.
£1.05.
0 907839 11 11

Twenty years ago in the *New Statesman* Raymond Williams, reviewing a book on early popular fiction, welcomed it as a worthy if humble follower on a trail "pioneered" thirty years before by Q. D. Leavis in *Fiction and the Reading Public*. It was, he averred, "peinstaking work" of the kind now needed, offering "much welcome new detail" and revealing a thing or two which were "not what we had supposed". The happy object of this Olympian approval was J. M. S. Tompkins's *Popular Novel in England 1770-1860*, or rather a reissue of it, for the book had originally appeared in 1932, the same year, in fact, as Mrs Leavis's book.

It's an amusing illustration of how successful the Leavises' self-promoting enterprise had been in establishing the idea of that book's seminal status. An enriching polemical work, whose value lay in the putting down of a set of influential ideological markers, was being taken as a pioneering study of historical fact. Had Williams had the clear idea he appeared to lay claim to of what scholarship had come up with by 1962, or 1932, he might or might not have written differently. But it seems a fair guess that if the book had not been by Mrs Leavis, the impulse to assume its priority and its implied influence would not have been so compelling.

This year is the half-century of that *unus mirabilis* which saw the publication not only of *Fiction and the Reading Public* but also of *New Bearings in English Poetry*, and the launching of *Scrutiny*. Mrs Leavis died last year, leaving some work sadly uncompleted, and it is good to have, at this time, two publications which share an impulse to celebrate her distinction as a collaborator of her husband and a critic of the novel in her own right. Both authors appear to think that they are at last settling the record straight, and both seem oddly unaware that what they are voicing, however right in itself, has long been a sub-teme of Leavisian autobiography, accusations of neglect included. The crowning gesture is the defiant bizzarerie of the Leavises' dedication of their joint book *Dickens the Novelist* (1970) to each other, "as proof... of forty years and more of daily collaboration in... the fostering of that true respect for creative writing, creative minds, and... the English tradition, without which literary criticism can have no validity and no life".

M. B. Kinch's and P. J. M. Robertson's books are in a way themselves extensions of the promotional enterprise. This does not invalidate them, but it is a fact that in 1975, in a letter to Robertson, presumably written in the knowledge that his book was in the offing and now at all events cited as an epigraph to it, F. R. Leavis stated that the "fictional collaboration is historical" and that "on the novel" his wife "has the final word". This is also the "fictional" of Kinch's memorial pamphlet from the Bynmill Press, which says that the work of Mrs Leavis is "as fine a body of criticism as any we have". Kinch samples five types of critical activity: the rehabilitation of a neglected or underrated writer (Richard Jefferies); the more ghastly exercise of preventing "the undeserved rehabilitation of a hitherto all-but-forgotten writer" (Charlotte Yonge); the "discovery" of a forgotten writer (Ottobianchi); the immediate recognition

of "a modern classic" (*Darkness at Noon*); and the "uncompromising... rejection" of inferior work by a distinguished contemporary (Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas*). Kinch quotes a good deal of Mrs Leavis's acuteness and energy of mind as vividly in evidence. The act of homage would have been more telling without the inflated claims. Ironically, Mrs Leavis's over-enthusiasm to rescue Mrs Leavis's reputation from its subordination to F. R. Leavis's seems likely to do so less effectively than the account of her in William Walsh's recent book on her husband.

Robertson's book is freer of inflation, and more concerned with the collaborative nature of the Leavises' achievement. He argues convincingly that the collaboration cannot be properly assessed without a more generous appraisal of Mrs Leavis's writings, though he stops short of the imperious claims cited from F. R.

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Leavis, and more concerned with the collaborative nature of the Leavises' achievement. He argues convincingly that the collaboration cannot be properly assessed without a more generous appraisal of Mrs Leavis's writings, though he stops short of the imperious claims cited from F. R.



Dr and Mrs Leavis

Leavis in his epigraph. The book offers a useful conspectus of the couple's entire career, and is the first to do so in a way which gives full and equal importance to the role of both partners. It is concerned with a single aspect, the criticism of fiction, and does not deal with the *Scrutiny* operation except in so far as it produced some important over-criticism. For the *Scrutiny* years, their social history and the biographical facts, we have Francis Mulhern's remarkable book, *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'*. But since Q. D. Leavis's major writings were almost exclusively on fiction, and since F. R.'s fiction criticism was deeply integrated with his study of poetry and drama, the potential scope of *The Leavises on Fiction* is more comprehensive than its title might suggest.

Leavis often wrote about novels, as he wrote about poems, with an intensive concentration on short passages and a relative indifference to the larger "structural" properties of an extended narrative. The object and the strength of the method was to capture the distinctive quality of a work, its significant "life". It is largely free of that interest in "technique" which informed some of the novel criticism of authors the Leavises admired, like Henry James. C. H. Rickwood's *Note on Fiction* (1927), had stressed the central importance of what James had called the "interior drama", at the expense of a partial or mechanical fixation on "character" or "story". This essay,

kind of poetic complexity and organization as Shakespeare's plays... Shakespeare becomes the touchstone for criticism of the novel, and the great novelists are the "natural successors" of Shakespeare. The Arnoldian term is appropriate: the centres of value and distinction are found in the "poetry" of representative passages, in their rhythms and imagery, their insights, their felt and communicated "life". The apprehension of these qualities preceded all other critical preoccupations. It established the canon as well as revealing the living centre of individual works.

Fiction and the Reading Public is credited by Robertson with supplying the "investigative... scholarship" on which F. R. Leavis's "essential" discriminations are based. This was, of course, R. Leavis's view, and if the truth were told, it enshines the two aspects of Q. D. Leavis's role which the mythology has always fostered: her indispensability and her ancillary status. The latter aspect is to be dispensed with. It is inseparable from the former as it is inseparable from the method. This image does not do justice to Q. D. Leavis's best work, especially the later work. But neither is it true of the earlier. "Investigative" scholarship of modern bestellers is a distant thing from a genuinely historical and intelligent analysis of older writings. The thesis that a progressive deterioration of taste and standards

had been occurring alongside the growth of literacy was an animating insight for the Leavises' critique of contemporary culture. But the idea of situating the positive norm in a "best eighteenth-century tradition", and of seeing Charlotte Brontë and Dickens as transitional figures in the decline, was arbitrary and unverifiable, and sooner or later to be neutralized by the Leavises' own revised valuations.

An awkward feature from the start was the Leavises' lukewarm estimate of eighteenth-century fiction, and where Q. D. Leavis did offer extended sympathetic analysis of an eighteenth-century novelist, for example Sterne, this hardly paved the way for F. R. Leavis's subsequent "essential" discrimination. "Irresponsible (and nasty) trifling". The famous footnote in *The Great Tradition* is directed at the Bloomsbury view of Sterne "as in some way

The period after 1950 and especially after the demise of *Scrutiny* is one of increasing "romantic" emphasis, or of a fusion of classic and romantic, of Jane Austen and Lawrence seen as the heirs of Shakespeare. Q. D. Leavis's essay on "Hawthorne as Poet" in the *Sewanee Review* (1951) contributed to the evolution of the "dramatic poem" concept and reinforced *The Great Tradition*'s view of "how James can be linked with Shakespeare through both Jane Austen and Hawthorne", rather than identified with a dovetailed Flaubertian dedication to "art". Her later writings on Jane Austen in introductions to *Mansfield Park* (1957) and *Sense and Sensibility* (1958) mark a shift in emphasis from the earlier ones, as do other essays on women writers, including a high reappraisal of Charlotte Brontë in the introduction to the Penguin *Jane Eyre* (1966). (Her studies of women writers at all periods are notably free of facile feminism and sex-hostility. She insisted on regarding the great women writers as "major English novelists irrespective of sex" and in the late 1930s, in a well-known passage also cited by Kinch and likely to exasperate feminists, spoke of the best "female writing" as requiring certain "masculine" qualities of mind.)

D. H. Lawrence: Novelist appeared in 1955. The evolution of F. R. Leavis's attitudes to Lawrence, and their influence on his view of the "classical" Eliot, with whom Lawrence is so often paired in Leavis's criticism, are well known. In Robertson's scheme, it is the first important book of the "romantic" phase and a new stage in the rediscovery of Dickens. Dickens is a shadowy presence in the book, and thought of as a somewhat inferior precursor of Lawrence. This in turn opened the way for the upward revaluation of Dickens, which in its turn enhanced the discussion of Lawrence in Leavis's late books, notably *Nor Shall My Sword* (1972).

Dickens the Novelist (1970) is regarded by Robertson as the culmination of the Leavises' work on the novel, both as the most fully collaborative production and as the best. It is in a particular way Mrs Leavis's achievement, since she wrote two-thirds of it and since the three essays by her husband are reprints of reworkings of earlier studies. It is here that the conception of Dickens as "the Shakespeare of the novel" receives its culminating expression, and her part in the evolution of the idea of the novel as dramatic poem was considerable. It is largely from her that the book derives its international perspective: it came more naturally to her than to her husband to see the novel in tradition as one which includes Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and the American masters, and her writings on American authors, going back to the 1930s, are a decisive element in this and perhaps underrated contribution to the study of American literature by the Leavises. P. J. M. Robertson's Appendix on "The Leavises and Other Literatures" offers a convenient sketch of a topic large and interesting enough to warrant study in its own right, and it would be good to see it explored more fully.

ARCHITECTURE

Standing firm in the storm

By J. M. Richards

ALAN WINDSOR:
Peter Behrens: Architect and Designer 1868-1940
186pp. Architectural Press. £12.95.
0 85139 072 2

In September of last year two damask table-cloths and twelve table-napkins came up for sale at Christie's and fetched £3,500. "A high price", commented *The Times* sale room correspondent, adding that it exemplified the present fashion for turn-of-the-century art. So it did, and recognized at the same time the unique position held by the German Peter Behrens who designed them for Carl Möckelberg - they were sold by one of his descendants.

Behrens was a versatile designer whose place in the history books is, however, mainly that of an architect - the first to introduce monumentalism into industrial buildings without resort to period allusions and the mentor of Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, all of whom worked at one time or another in his office. Alan Windsor claims that Mies's famous aphorism "less is more" began with Behrens.

As an architect Behrens was self-taught. He started as a painter, an illustrator and a designer of many things from type-faces to theatre-sets. Although his revolutionary instincts often seem to be at war with his classical allegiances (his architecture in particular was seldom free from the influence of Schinkel) what emerges in his designs is an urge to humanize technology and in this lies their relevance to our own day. For that reason alone it is surprising that this is the first book on Behrens to have appeared in English. Windsor has written it admirably. As a biographer he is clear and concise. His descriptions of the designs and buildings bring out their character and quality and his judgments are restrained and not forced to conform to any theory. The illustrations are well chosen though mudily reproduced. The plans are irritatingly small.

The book leaves one more gap to be filled: a study of Josef Olbrich, who was in a sense Behrens's teacher though only a year older, and who

might have become an even greater figure had he not died (in 1908) when he was only forty-one. Olbrich was Austrian, but he came to Darmstadt in 1898 (the year in which Behrens migrated there from Munich) at the invitation of the Grand Duke of Hesse who, on succeeding to the title in 1892, had become an enlightened patron of the arts, and especially the practical arts, on the model of his grandfather Prince Albert in England. The Grand Duke employed some of the English architects newly admired in Germany, including Baillo Scott and C. R. Ashbee, to design interiors for his *Residenz*, but a more unusual initiative on his part was the establishment at Darmstadt of a *Kunstlerkolonie*, a group of model houses designed to be at the same time dwellings for artists and, as regards their interiors, demonstrations of the new style of living to be displayed at the forthcoming Darmstadt *Ausstellung* of 1901.

The houses themselves were all designed by Olbrich except one, which was by Behrens - his first work of architecture. It is not a revolutionary building externally, being in a fairly traditional North German style with prominent gables outlined in green glazed bricks. Over the hall window is the inscription "Steh Fest, mein Haus, im Weitebraus" which may be taken to sum up Behrens's contribution to architecture at a time of general upheaval in the arts and most notably a time when Art Nouveau and similar fashions were tending to undermine contemporary attempts to find aesthetic inspiration in the changes taking place in industry and technology.

The plan of the house is much less conventional. Spaces open into each other somewhat like those in the early houses of Frank Lloyd Wright, who was born as it happens one year before Behrens. The Darmstadt house was built five years after Van de Volder's celebrated house at Ucclo and has certain resemblances to it, as Windsor points out. Van de Volder was certainly an influence on Behrens, especially in connection with his ambition to elevate the status of architectural and product design to that of the fine arts, and so perhaps was Charles Renée Mackintosh, who was born in the same year and was another who turned his hand to many branches of design.

appropriate that Gavin Stamp's account of Schultz's work for both the 3rd and 4th Marquesses of Bute, commissioned by the latter Marquess, should have appeared in 1981. The earliest known contact between Schultz and the 3rd Marquess occurred in 1889; Schultz was a pupil of the Edinburgh architect Sir Robert Rowand Anderson, who did much work for Bute, but it seems to have been his researches into Byzantine architecture that drew him to Bute's attention. He was subsequently responsible for alterations and additions to several of Bute's many houses, including a number of chapels, as well as restoring or rebuilding ruined castles and churches. The only job in England was his extensive work at St John's Lodge, Regent's Park, much of which has now sadly disappeared (including the two chapels). After the death of the 3rd Marquess in 1900, Schultz was employed by his son, the 4th Marquess, until 1915, the year of the opening of St Andrew's Chapel, about which time the two men fell out.

Schultz was a typical Arts and Crafts architect to that what mattered most to him were "sound craftsmanship and reasonable building"; style was comparatively unimportant, and he designed in almost every conceivable one. It is hardly surprising that the aesthetic quality of the resulting work should be uneven, but the workmanship redeems it, and his inventiveness was truly remarkable, as is shown by the very striking, unexecuted design for a Catholic church at Rollesay illustrated by Stamp.

Schultz's own fastidious attention to detail is worthily reflected in the exemplary production of this book, printed at the Curwen Press on antique laid paper, sewn and bound in paper covers, with an Ingres paper wrapper. The typography is impeccable, the margins are wide, and the four diagrams and thirty-three plates are clearly printed. Those who are put off by the price can be assured that this slim but handsome volume will provide them, not only with a perceptive and sympathetic account of a fascinating relationship between an architect and two clients, but with an aesthetic satisfaction rarely to be found in a book these days.

although admired today chiefly as an architect.

After the Darmstadt house Behrens - still with no formal training - acquired a substantial architectural practice, mostly at first limited to domestic and exhibition buildings. Their style was still fairly eclectic with echoes of neoclassicism. He also acquired a reputation as a teacher which remained with him all his life. In 1903 he moved to Düsseldorf and in 1907 to Berlin. In that year and in that city came the turning-point of his career: his appointment by the directors of one of the greatest German industrial concerns, the AEG (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft) first as designer of a number of their products and then as architect of their buildings. This gave him the chance to fulfil his ambition to introduce the most carefully thought-out aesthetic standards into everyday life and especially into the industrial life by means of which Germany was beginning to assert herself in the world.

For 1907 was also the year of the formation of the *Werkbund*, with Behrens a founder member. This was an association concerned not only with the reform of art and design education and the reconciliation of fine and applied art - topics always close to Behrens's heart - but, as Windsor stresses, with the expansion of German influence and economic strength in the world. He cites Friedrich Naumann, the Christian-Socialist political theorist, as comparing the *Werkbund* with the Navy League: "Just as the League encouraged Germany to demand a larger role in world politics, so the *Werkbund* should work to extend Germany's economic power."

For AEG Behrens built numerous factories and similar buildings, largely discarding neoclassicism as a style but preserving the rigour and discipline associated with it. Some were of monumental scale, the most famous being the turbine hall at Mohle, in Berlin, 1909-1910. Nikolaus Pevsner describes it in *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936) as "perhaps the most beautiful industrial building ever erected up to that time", a somewhat surprising judgment in view of his insistence that the classics of early modern architecture were necessarily based on a frank expression of structure.

The powerful-looking corners of the Mohle building, framing the great central window on the much-photographed end elevation and banded like masonry, perform in fact no supporting function and bear no relation to the steel framing which encloses the great space within.

Although in his more domestic work Behrens maintained his allegiance to Schinkel, whom he regarded as a more significant pioneer than William Morris and the Pro-Raphaelites, in the one opportunity he was given of designing a monumental public building he aimed at something more like a great Renaissance palazzo. This was the German embassy in St Petersburg, which he was commissioned to design in 1911. It has a facade nearly 200 feet long with a giant order of engaged columns and pilasters. The assistant in charge of the project was Mies van der Rohe, who left Behrens's office in 1912. The building still stands. When this reviewer visited it a couple of years ago it was in use as the Leningrad headquarters of the Russian Ministry of Tourism. It had been much altered internally (Windsor says that it was sacked by a Russian mob at the outbreak of the First World War) but Mies's hand was interestingly evident in the detailing of the main staircase and in several fireplaces.

The St Petersburg embassy, in Windsor's apt phrase, "represents a high point in Behrens's professional if not artistic career". He was only forty-four when it was finished, but although he continued to practise successfully his pioneering days were over. His most distinguished subsequent building was the technical headquarters he built at Hoechst between 1920 and 1924 for Hoechst Farbwerke, part of the vast IG Farben company that had come to dominate world production of synthetic dyestuffs. It contains a balconied central hall, ascending in stages to the full height of the building, dramatically expressed in treatment.

which he had designed in 1910, while he was in Berlin that he died in 1940.

and again reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright.

The St Petersburg embassy has been considered, according to Windsor, as something of a prototype for the official architecture of the Third Reich. He says that Adolf Hitler is known to have liked it but he gives no source for this information. Neither is he able to determine just when Behrens's political sympathies lay. His last great industrial building was at Linz in Austria and he was vice-president of the Austrian *Werkbund* when, in 1933, the decision was taken to exclude Jews and Socialists from membership as the parent body in Germany had already done. In addition he made some attempts to ingratiate himself with the new powers in Germany, although it is uncertain whether he was a Nazi Party member, and he agreed to design a new AEG headquarters building (never executed) as part of the monumental scheme, the *Nord-Süd Achse*, which Albert Speer planned for Berlin to complement the east-west axis formed by Unter den Linden and the Strasse des 17. Juni. On the other hand Speer claimed that he had been able to protect Behrens when the latter was accused of association with Jews and Bolsheviks. Behrens made no attempt to get out of Germany, as did so many of the younger architects, including his erstwhile pupils Gropius and Mies, if he was in Berlin that he died in 1940.

His working life, which thus ends on a sadly equivocal note, nevertheless provides the key in much that happened in architecture and design in the first half of the present century. Subject to every influence from Art Nouveau to Nazism, he absorbed them all, not only into his own designs but into the ethos of his generation through his standing as an educator and administrator. Alan Windsor justly describes him as devoted to a concept of life that was benign and creative in spite of the social and political upheavals through which he lived.

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Asking to be interrupted

By Grevel Lindop

ANDREW WATERMAN:
Out for the Elements
151pp. Manchester: Carcanet New
Press. £3.95.
0 85635 377 9

"Life", remarks Andrew Waterman, "has ways of interrupting / poetry". The adventure he undertakes in his fourth book, *Out for the Elements*, is to develop a poetry as vulnerable as possible to the impact of "life" — a poetry that achieves "focus" — a favourite Waterman word — by "trust in craft, collaboration / with elements": the craft being a tight formal control and the elements, mainly, those of ordinary human experience as exemplified by a year or so of the poet's own life.

Out for the Elements — the long title-poem as well as the whole volume — might roughly be described as an autobiography framed in a diary, the past recaptured through the preoccupations of the present. The book's four sections interlock neatly. "Given Worlds" is a sequence of twenty lyrics exploring individual memories or insights: the hapless marital quarrel, the grisly summer day at the office ("Downfall all the Way", finely carved out from a slacker, wordier version in Waterman's first book), childhood memories, visions of old age. Not all these poems succeed; a few verge on banality and some are much too close to well-known poems by Larkin. But the parts add up to a larger whole. The real concern of "Given Worlds" is the quest for significant patterns — visions, archetypes, whatever — that might lie somewhere beyond the messy human reality and make sense of it. Yet the quest for that involves a fear of them. In "That Place" Waterman finds the realm of the imagination a "Contraption of / such clarity, a frigid blaze / still throwing off enlarging rings", a "beautiful sterility, / soliciting no cries out here". Elsewhere, he refers almost with indignation to the way art delivers its "sentence designed to knock us cold... charging / our days with everything they meant / returning them to us patrifried". The notion of the Platonic Form gleaming at us from the custard advertisement is, of course, present in Larkin's work, but Waterman gives it a new urgency. He strongly desires and resents the consolations of art and the imagination — a tension that makes *Out for the Elements* an engaging and exciting book.

The section of "Shorter Poems" which follows contains nothing that is particularly impressive, except "The Wives' Tale", a labyrinthine tangle of village gossip reported in Waterman's bemused, deadpan manner; the poem is very funny indeed. In retrospect, however, one sees that the short poems are essentially footnotes and marginal glosses to "Anglo-Irish" and "Out for the Elements", the two longer poems which form the book's core.

"Anglo-Irish" explores the present situation in Northern Ireland from Waterman's standpoint as a marginal figure commuting several times a year between England and Coleraine. It offers no conclusions, and certainly no "solution", unless you hold "Geology... five billion years of continental drift / and / all / in Greenland, where the polar-bears / are welcome to it". Yet the poem's considerable power derives from the fact that Waterman clearly loves the place and its inhabitants at least as much as he hates them, and so is able to say bluntly without malice several of the things one is not supposed to say about the North's

tribes — both glad of the English to leave, and while for helping, and look for having life less real / than they boast with pride, both touching and corrupted deeply.

The feeling that life is more real in the North of Ireland is one that Waterman seems uneasily aware of. He is writing about the North, but

hated English who fear political argument and "would square / receding / asked 'Come to Ulster?'". The fluent invective makes lively, disturbing reading; its account of folly and corruption is harsh but never condemnatory. And at certain moments there are glimpses through the inconsequent and ludicrous of a mythic significance: a bus driver, for example, stops his bus in open country, gets out and

begins what I can only take to be an ethnic dance, each leg alternate lifting, or is he mad king Sweeney's incarnation who hopped half-hired in fields and lived on crosses?

The explanation, when it comes, is simple enough: "a bee had / got up his trumpery leg while he was driving". The anecdotal tone and the taste for absurdity, combined with Waterman's supple, economical use of blank verse, make the poem look deceptively simple. Yet there is a compression and vigour that one is tempted to call Browningesque — the same purposeful garrulity, a torrent of words but not one wasted, the whole ordered by a fast, quirky intelligence.

These qualities are carried over into "Out for the Elements", which is written with remarkable facility in the complex fourteen-line *Eugene Onegin* stanza. It is long — 2,491 lines in all, one stanza being a line short —

Bringing the light

By Robin Buss

JACQUES ROUBAUD:
Dors
Précédé de Dire la Poésie
145pp. Paris: Gallimard.

The poem that we hear is not the same as the one we read with the eye. To receive it, we need not be part of an audience: Jacques Roubaud cites the shepherds of East Africa — he is not sure whether they are Sudanese or Eritrean — who recite to themselves alone or to their flocks. And he recalls at the 1977 Cambridge Poetry Festival an audience whose expectation of

poetry was at first denied by the absence of Denis Roche ("Il a envoyé son télégramme grand-mère malade" and the arrival of a Black Mountain non-post so drunk that he stood for ten minutes in front of the microphone unable to speak, except to complain of the lights. The poetry, when it did at last emerge, in many voices and accents, seemed to Roubaud to have a life independent of the shaggy flock in the auditorium.

Dire la Poésie is an extended reflection on this spoken dimension, the twin of what is written on the page, but a defence, necessarily, of performance poetry, which too often adopts rhetorical devices without submitting to rhetorical constraints. It is the constraints that attract Roubaud, who has ex-

A lime tree buzzed with its remembered bees.
We stood on the terrace. Fanatic prayers
Roared in the darkening glass. Silenced martyr
"Ave!" Cicadas. Insect toasters.

Nervously proud, itself, and secular,
A fox patrolled on its instinctive routes
Past us and nut trees to the absolute:
Wild pathless woods, a French fox, pure regard.

Heron and the oecylopaedic owl
Plotted the ground and sky of dusk. Oldest
Inhabited valley — we felt it blessed
By creatures and impacted human soul.

She said, "The world is coming out tonight."
Vézère's falaises moved grey, an ivied mist
Disgusted the distance and we stood, one trust:
In islands, jostling birds, the impolite

Belates, the heavy hornets and the truths
Compiling in our senses, plain, of this life;
If inappetite, I love my wife.
Our two lives fluttered like two windowed moths.

She was the gentiest creature of them all.
She scattered milk-dipped bread for the lazy snakes
Asleep in the Moulinière's bramble-breaks,
I asked her, "Why?" "It's only natural."

A paradisaic stasis filled the dark.
A snake's hiss in milk, a snake's cry creature.
I dip my bread in milk, and I think of her.
The châteline of her reasonable ark.

Douglas Dunn

but the wit and vividness do not flag. It deals with an astonishing range of material, using as framework a characteristically wary and introspective account of Waterman's nomadic existence in England and Ireland during 1979 and 1980. Into this structure is fitted, by means of flashback, a brief autobiography — as well as a Moss Side christening-party, Korchnoi playing chess at County Hall, the growth of violence in Belfast, arguments in pubs, a visit to the cool, staccato-hung recesses of Poole's Cavern in Derbyshire and much more besides.

The range of material, as well as the intricate rhyming stanza, will probably, for the English reader, recall Byron rather than Pushkin, and as with Don Juan (or, for that matter, *Tristram Shandy*) life and art develop together and form a strange counterpoint. Poetry and experience collide several times; a stanza soaring into speculation about the existence of parallel universes is fractured by a stone hurrying through the window of Waterman's Manchester flat:

I pick shattered
glass from my carpet, slightly thrown
myself. Some passing drunk? teenagers?
a clairvoyant Moss Side unbragging
Senuet Johnson relating, in the
after the manner in which he
disposed of Berkeley's speculations?

In the pub he talks to a depressed
girl, who is soon telling him "We're
fine, my kids and me", though, it
turns out, three of her children died

in infancy: "Oh, I remember / all their birthdays, to me they stay / alive and growing every day". Waterman reflects, with a fierce pleasure, "There's / life answering academic jacks / who, reading Wordsworth, have demurred / at 'We Are Seven' as absurd". (Waterman is fond of these reformulations of the great moments of Romanticism; thus, for example, Keats's unheard melodies become "the unrecorded golden / long-lost cornet of Buddy Bolden / inventing jazz blow[ing] sweet and clear / to the imagination's ear". Not just a playful mannerism, these details serve to make the poem, on one level, a criticism and reaffirmation of Romantic values.)

The most remarkable interruption of poetry by life occurs at the end of Part Two, where the poet, who was brought up in adoption, suddenly learns the names of his actual parents. The news contains a surprise of such ironic implication that I shall not weaken its impact by revealing it here; enough to say that it will force most readers into a startled reappraisal of all that has preceded it in the book.

The poem's range of diction is as wide as that of its subjects. Its modes vary from the rich pastoralism of:

white cottages with turfs scattered
along some quartz-lined glen-side battered

explored them in Japanese verse, in the chain poetry of *Kenga*, in the Grands Rhétoriques, in the Provencal and Italian poetry and in the experiments of OnLipo. His impassioned celebration of the alexandrine, *La violence d'Alexandre*, ended with the assertion that he could not predict how poetry would emerge from the *crise de vers* which he had described, but made it clear that he saw hope in a return to rigorous formal constraints.

He suggests a variety of different readings for the three sections of *Dors* which bring out the semantic and structural parallels between the poems. The key-words are darkness, silence and solitude, which is to say the absence of light, sound and other people. The windows look towards, the

night is non-reflective, *sans l'air*, a mirror without silvering, in a phrase which has come, since the late nineteenth century, to imply a kind of purity and which intensifies the idea of absence. These are spare, stark poems, moving towards that dangerous "rarefaction réfléchie des signes sur la page, toujours plus grande qu'eux", which Roubaud noted in *La violence d'Alexandre* as a characteristic of much contemporary verse and which is only partly compensated for by the elaborate play of correspondence between the individual words in the series.

There is a much richer surface to "Tombeaux de Pétrarque", made up of nine *neuvèmes*, a form invented by Raymond Queneau on the model of the *sestina*, where the same words are repeated in each stanza in varying order at the end of each line. The key-words are taken from the fifty-four end-words in the nine sections of Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, every line in Roubaud's poem containing three of these words, either at the beginning, middle or end of the line. The effect on the reader is similar to the effect of expectation produced by rhyme, but more hypoxic (which is not the only link with the poems of *Dors*). Spoken aloud they do acquire a resonance which is lacking on the printed page.

The guiding themes of darkness and light preside over the two final sections, inspired by Irish poetry of the Dark Ages and Red Indian hymns to the sun and the wind: "Le bout de nos doigts porte la trace du vent... I am, repeated in the authenticity of these and can only be grateful to Roubaud for the pleasure they gave me. Like the other poems in the collection they celebrate, with apparent ease, the hard graft of bringing light out of darkness, naming the elusive word, working a remedial form, which makes the difference between a poem and a drunken hiccup. The Irish poet do his cat:

Parfois après une lutte terrible
une souris tombe en son pouvoir
et moi je prends dans mon filet
le mot difficile à comprendre

Même si notre labeur est long
nous ne nous dérangeons jamais
car chaque mot est un travail
et chacun en profite seul

Le travail qu'il accomplit chaque jour
est celui pour lequel il est fait
et moi je suis préparé au mieux
mon labeur à la lumière.

All parts and no whole

By Martin Kemp

ANNA MARIA BRIZIO, MARIA
VITTORIA BRUGNOLI and ANDRÉ
CHASTEL:
Leonardo the Artist
0 09 142641 3
CARLO ZIMMATTIO, AUGUSTO
MARINONI and ANNA MARIA BRIZIO:
Leonardo the Scientist
0 09 142651 0

LUDWIG H. HEYDENREICH, BERN
DIBNER and LADISLAW RETI:
Leonardo the Inventor
0 09 142661 8
92 pages each. Hutchinson. £4.95
each.

Art publishing is a curious business — or so it appears to academic authors. In the popular, semi-popular and relatively scholarly sectors of the market, it often seems as though all the publishers are choosing the same books on a few favoured artists. Among central Italian artists of the High Renaissance, Leonardo and Michelangelo certainly fall into the most favoured category. Raphael hovering at its fringes, while Fra Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto are guaranteed to send all but the most dedicated of academic presses running for cover.

The publishers of the three books under review have judged that the market can bear even a repackaged assortment of essays which had previously appeared as a single volume in 1974 as *The Unknown Leonardo* under the editorship of the late Ladislao Reti. The stimulus behind the original volume was the rediscovery in 1965 of the two Codices in the Medici Biblioteca Nazionale, made available to the public nine years later in facsimile and transcription with a judicious translation and commentary by Reti. *The Unknown Leonardo*, at least in these essays which functioned best, aimed to make sense of the new Codices in the broader context of Leonardo's other surviving work. Although the end result was rather schizophrenic, aspiring to be both a book about the new discoveries and a general introduction to Leonardo's universality, it has proved to be more consistently useful than most scissors-and-paste jobs, and it attracted less than its due notice when it first appeared.

Designed and often over-designed, by Emil Böhner, *The Unknown Leonardo* combined pages of handsome appearance, with pages full of illustrations, trickier which served to make life confusing for the reader. The regrouped essays in the three smaller volumes look immediately attractive. They have retained much of the generally excellent quality of the original colour illustrations and benefited from the simplification in design which has accompanied the smaller format. Appearances, however, can be deceptive. The majority of the illustrations have been taken over at the original scale, regardless of the reduced page-area. The result is some extraordinary sludges and foldings of images and fragmentations of text. The Borghese "Leda" for example, has been covered at knee level, given a special kind of centre-fold treatment which underlines the side around which she "contraposts" while hilariously ensuring that the spine of the book emerges that part of her anatomy which is most relevant to the narrative.

On a more serious level, the compilation of the original book and its subsequent repackaging, raise important questions about our willingness and ability to approach the Renaissance and its greatest artist in terms which are not irredeemably anachronistic. The visual fragmentation of the design is matched by the process of fragmentation to which recent generations have subjected Leonardo's

work. The original volume was one of many attempts to embrace Leonardo's range by employing a team of specialists from different disciplines, each of whom wrote on "Leonardo

as a...". That it was more successful than most such attempts was partly due to Reti's guiding hand and to a good choice of authors, including such established heavyweights as Chastel, Marinoni and Heydenreich, the latter in particularly good form. Not the least informative essays were provided by Reti himself, on "The Elements of Machines" and, in partnership with Bedini, on "Horology". This second essay has been excluded from the present volumes, together with Winternitz's characteristically agreeable "Leonardo and Music". The only obvious explanation for their omission is that they do not fit in with the repackaging. But it is with the question of how we fit Leonardo's activities into our modern schemes of intellectual classification that the really serious problems begin.

One of Leonardo's designs for *Impresso* shows a sieve through which sand freely runs. The political meaning of the *impresso* is that the sand falls because it is not unified. It can also justly serve as an emblem for our attempts to capture the nature of Leonardo's creative intellect in what we call art and science. Its central core continually seems to run through our fingers like sand through a sieve — not, I believe, because this core did not exist, but because our apparatus is ill-equipped to retain it intact. *The Unknown Leonardo*, even if it did not capture this unity, at least possessed the advantage that it gathered together a number of aspects of his diversity in one place. The present three-part division of the essays under the headings of "The Artist", "The Scientist" and "The Inventor" is a monument to a special kind of compartmentalized utility.

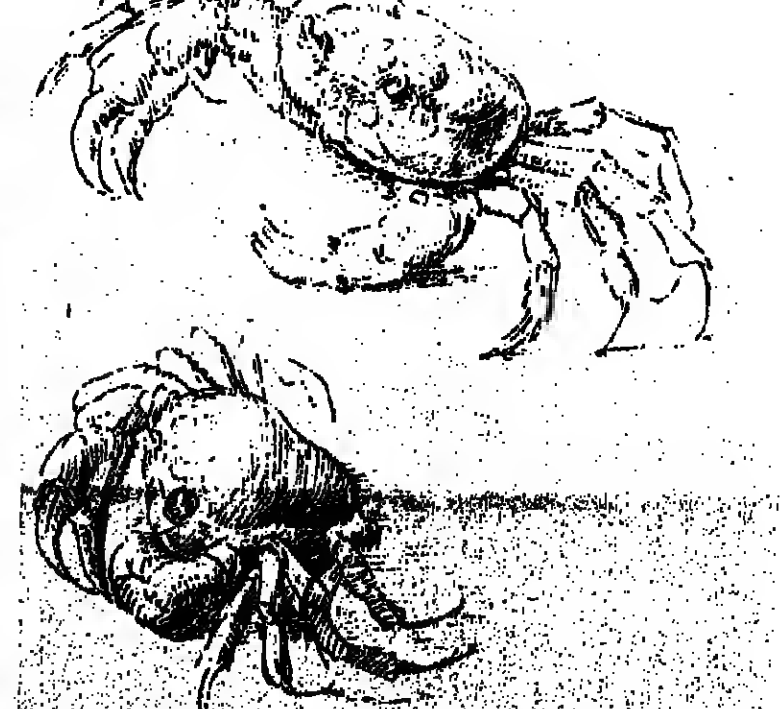
Leonardo the Artist contains a piece (and wisely anonymous) attempt to illustrate "The Universal Genius"; a survey of Leonardo's paintings which is cut short, about 1505 by an excursus on the Mad Codices (by Anna Maria Brizio); a rather speculative essay devoted largely to the proposed casting techniques for the Sforza Monument, now masquerading as an account of

"The Sculptor" (by Maria Vittoria Brugnoli); and a decent explanation of the treatise on painting, with special reference to the Spanish manuscripts, retitled "The Teacher" (by André Chastel).

Leonardo the Scientist features a useful essay on hydraulic and architectural engineering (by Carlo Zamattio); an exposition of Leonardo as a writer, which contains some good things, but seems uncertain of what it is trying to accomplish as a whole (by Augusto Marinoni); a rag-bag of miscellaneous quotations from the notebooks; a few pages devoted to Leonardo's supposed bicycle, of which I continue to be deeply suspicious (by Marinoni again); and an illustrated chronology which makes no consistent attempt to differentiate between documented and hypothetical dates. The volume contains nothing central to his optics, anatomy, physiology, impetus mechanics or geology. Its title is resoundingly misleading.

Leonardo the Inventor is the most satisfactory of the books. It comprises three essays which relate to one another nicely. Ludwig Heydenreich's good account of the military architecture, including the Arno canal and Piombino fortifications, both of which have been significantly illustrated from the Madrid discoveries; Bern Dibner's convincing account of "Machines and Weapons"; and Reti's perceptive comments on the important series of mechanical drawings in Madrid. The relative success of this volume can be attributed to the authors and to the fact that the Madrid Codices' most substantial contributions to our knowledge of Leonardo are in the field of engineering. However, the ration of three major essays per volume has excluded Reti and Bedini on their pieces and forced other aspects of his engineering into "The Scientist" compartment.

Many of the difficulties arise simply as by-products of the packaging process, but they do reflect a deeper malaise in Renaissance scholarship. The general thrust of histor-



A crab caught in two sketches by Leonardo, c. 1481; reproduced from *The Inventions of Leonardo da Vinci* by Charles G. Smith and Gareth Rees (110pp. Oxford: Phaidon. £7.95. 0 7148 1814 3).

ical scholarship in our institutions of higher education still seems to be towards specialization, in which each sub-discipline is required to demonstrate its virility by forging a language and developing techniques which exclude all but its special initiates. The gains in technical understanding and documentation of the past have been less than in the history of art — but at a price. That price has been the sacrifice of the broader insight which illumines the past as a living whole. To say, as these books and their parent volume attempt to do, that Leonardo did a wide variety of things remarkably well is true enough, but it misses the central point of his intellectual life.

The way to a proper understanding of Leonardo is frustrated not only by our inability to approach him across

the whole range of his endeavours, but also by our failure to recognize the fundamental habits of analogy and sense of universal affinities which characterized many of the greatest attempts in the later Middle Ages to understand the nature of created things. There are, fortunately, exceptions to this incapacity. Petrick Boyde's *Dante Philomathes* and *Philosopher* provides one recent example, though Dante scholarship has never suffered so chronically from the kind of blinkered specialization which has afflicted students of Leonardo. And Dorothy Koenigberger's *Renaissance Man and Creative Thinking* bravely attempts to transcend to over-interpret Leonardo's philosophy. I would like to think that such exceptions represent the beginnings of a trend, but I am not at all confident that this is so.

The connoisseur's case

By Francis Ames-Lewis

JOHN POPE-HENNESSY:
The Study and Criticism of Italian
Sculpture
270pp. Princeton University Press. £26.
0 691 03967 4

The title of this collection of ten essays, principally on Italian sculpture of the early Renaissance, is in conscious emulation of Bernard Berenson's volumes of critical essays called *The Study and Criticism of Italian Art*. A presumptuous emulation, one might think, were it not for the fact that this book, throughout reveals: Sir John Pope-Hennessy's sizeable debt to Berenson's critical position. Indeed, in setting forth in the opening essays what the dust-jacket calls, with some overstatement, a "manifesto wherein the author... defines his own approach" to critical problems, the book can be seen as Pope-Hennessy's fulsome tribute to the tradition of "Madonnas" of which Berenson was a preeminent representative.

Many of the problems tackled in these essays are well-known to the historian of early Renaissance art. Pope-Hennessy's solutions to them (whether or not to balance acceptable) are, however, often refreshingly unconventional and illuminating, both as contributions to our understanding of the sculptors concerned and as exercises in method, examples of connoisseurship in action. The book affords many revealing glimpses of the author's attitudes and changes in those attitudes during his career. Of Donatello's independent areas to which his attitude was at one time negative, but in which I

have become increasingly expansionist, a change which may (as Pope-Hennessy suggests in his first essay) be associated with the wisdom of age, and which is surely to be welcomed. Whereas it was the task of earlier generations of art historians to strip major figures of the minor works, like *Impet-like*, had become stuck to their names, many later scholars exercise their judgment by sensing through intuition the idiosyncratic qualities of major artists in works earlier rejected on the relatively restrictive grounds of de-facto style-criticism. The prime example of this approach is Pope-Hennessy's intriguing reassessment of the Bargello "Crucifixion" relief, which has had a chequered critical history, but is here once again accepted as an important late work by Donatello.

In judgments of style, quality and authorship, intuition is favoured by Pope-Hennessy over the rigorous, quasi-objective analytical approach adopted by scholars who distrust connoisseurship as a critical method. In his essay of Donatello's "Madonna" relief, for example, he comments that "I have a tremendous suspicion of logic; give me controlled intuition any day of the week". This aside is much more significant than appears at first sight; for the qualified term "controlled intuition" is perhaps the key to Pope-Hennessy's delicately balanced position between two critical traditions. In the first essay in this book, a previously unpublished lecture called, simply, "Connoisseurship", the author attempts fully to clarify his critical stance, so that it should serve (as he himself suggests in the preface) as an introduction to the other essays, as a guide to the way in which we, with him, may approach the works of art that he discusses.

Pope-Hennessy joins battle at once in this first essay. "My own interest in art history (and I should say this frankly at the start) lies predominantly in the murky area known as connoisseurship... the problems which I attack from choice are those arising out of works of art, for which the work of art itself is the main, sometimes the sole source of evidence". From the critical (although not from the merely art-historical) point of view, this essay is clearly the most important in the book. It starts with a brief history of the tradition of connoisseurship, from Jonathan Richardson through Morell, Berenson and others to Richard Offner's *An Outline of a Theory of Method*. "Only at one point in Offner's essay would I demur", writes Pope-Hennessy, quoting Offner's statement that the art historian has this in common with the better part of thinking humanity, that he knows by a sort of Kantian intuition when he is right. That Offner here overstressed the accuracy and value of intuition as a critical tool Pope-Hennessy demonstrates with two examples of errors of intuitive judgment. In these examples he might have added a third, in the original version of the last essay in his book, "The Forging of Italian Renaissance Sculpture". When published in 1974, as Pope-Hennessy recalls, this article "caused a flurry of thermohydraulic testing by the dunces of suspect torra-cottas... and as a result it has been demonstrated that two works which I had looked on as forgeries... undoubtedly date from the fifteenth century". Pope-Hennessy can admit, then, that he was mistaken in such cases, and he rightly doubts whether "an appeal to intuition" is much use; yet, nevertheless, he insists that many of his judgments of authenticity or authorship in this essay (and others in the book) have the air of

ex cathedra pronouncements. One wonders, in the light of these errors of his intuition, how he can continue to be so severely confident of other similar judgments.

In which critical camp, then, does Pope-Hennessy finally stand? He quotes Offner's other famous assertion of the primacy of connoisseurship, "If a document fails to agree with what I see with my own eyes, then the document is wrong", but he neither accepts it nor, by clarifying his own position, positively rejects it. By implication, though, he cannot follow Offner's extremist line: intuition controlled by historical information provides the middle-ground on which Pope-Hennessy pitches camp. For "connoisseurship is not a poor substitute for knowledge; but provides, the 'only' means by which our limited stock of documented knowledge can be broadened and brought into conformity with what actually occurred". The essay on "Connoisseurship" evolves finally into an appeal for the acceptance of this middle-ground in the teaching of future generations of art historians. "I believe simply that art history is a looser, more speculative science than some of its practitioners suppose, and that the technique of connoisseurship must be inculcated and encouraged if it is significant in the future. In practice, Pope-Hennessy may himself at times be accused of discouraging the exercise of "controlled intuition", as in his characteristically ruthless and caustic demolition of a young scholar's hypothesis that a major late fifteenth-century Florentine portrait bust may be a fake; but in theory this stirring appeal has much to be said for it. It may not be an exact Kantian intuition, but much use; yet, nevertheless, he insists that many of his judgments of authenticity or authorship in this essay (and others in the book) have the air of

An art, as opposed to a science

By Maurice Bloch

EDMUND LEACH:
Social Anthropology
254pp. Oxford University Press.
£9.50, 41 19 520371 0 (Fontana
paperback, £2.50, 0 00 635533 1).

"Social anthropology" is a term often used restrictively to denote a particular school of anthropology which flourished in Britain between roughly 1930 and 1960. It owed its origin to the combined influences of two leading figures, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown. Malinowski stressed the importance of detailed, long-term participant observation of societies, and believed that explanation in terms of institutions, beliefs and practices, was somehow a substitute for enquiry into historical origins. Radcliffe-Brown, basing himself on a fruitful misunderstanding of the French sociologist, Durkheim, developed the idea of "social structure", which implied that societies were integrated systems, rather like clocks, the parts of which were social relationships between people. For Radcliffe-Brown, the job of the social anthropologist was to collect and classify such systems, in order to understand the range of possible social arrangements available to man.

The combination of these two influences produced a school whose vitality and assurance amazed and irritated outsiders. It led to extraordinarily perceptive individual studies and to many fruitful generalizations. The excitement which social anthropology generated inspired many fine scholars to a pitch of enthusiasm and self-confidence unique in the history of the social sciences. This atmosphere is well conveyed by Sir Edmund Leach and explains why he talks of having been "converted" to participation in this joint enterprise. The religious connotations of the words he uses to describe this initial experience and his subsequent anthropological career tell us much about his intellectual development and ultimately about the writing of this book.

Social Anthropology appears in a new series of "Fontana Master guides" and is no doubt intended to offer some sort of introduction to the subject; however, the author warns us again and again that this is not going to be an ordinary book but a highly individualistic, almost autobiographical guide. He attempts to disarm the reviewer from the first by telling us that it is not

addressed to professional anthropological colleagues, most of whom are likely to be contemptuous of the style of anthropology which it advocates and which they may well denounce as old-fashioned, geocentric, unscientific, escapapist, lacking in coherence, political commitment, and so on. If I had to write a review of the book I would probably say something of this sort myself.

On the other hand, we are told that these deficiencies are compensated for by the fact that it gives us the flavour of Leach's own "kind of anthropology". My main objection to it, however, would not be the one which Leach himself suggests, namely, that Leach does not, or cannot, have his own kind of anthropology. To understand how this is possible about we need to follow his personal history after his "conversion".

Leach's contribution to his field was to undermine it irretrievably, especially in a book of extraordinary brilliance published in 1954, *Political Systems of Highland Burma*. The synthesis which had resulted in social anthropology was too good to last, and Leach went straight for its Achilles heel by pointing out that the notion of a bounded society on which it rested was totally misleading, and that therefore the vision of social anthropology was a false one.

analysis of the type of ethnographic system under examination. A similar view characterized several subsequent publications by Leach. All manifested the same fervency and accuracy in their criticism of current social anthropology.

Already something of the religious idiom in which Leach views social anthropology was apparent. The process was reminiscent of someone who, having had a strong religious education, attacks the church because, although his mind works away, deep inside himself, And as he grows old he yearns for new certainties to replace the old ones, but is dissatisfied to find they are not the real thing. In this way, Leach flirted for a while with the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss, but, as he also makes clear here, was not really able to accept its basic tenets. Other new developments, such as biological anthropology, the renewed Marxist anthropology of recent years, the kind of limited evolutionism of his Cambridge colleague, Jack Goody, and many other similar tendencies he simply rejects, with little attempt at understanding them. In this book we find Leach asking himself what he is left with.

That there is something left he assures us with great insistence. He not only has a chapter entitled "My Kind of Anthropology" but we are given, with admirable ecumenism, two "credos" and one "Here I stand...". But in spite of all the protestation it is far from clear what Leach does now stand for. Early on he spells out his "dogmas". One is an "idea of anthropology which rests on a belief that, despite all our reiterated diversities, there is some real sense in which mankind is a

Ceremonial occasions

By Peter Rivière

KAREN ERIKSSON PAIGE and
JEFFERY M. FAIGER
The Politics of Reproductive Ritual
380pp. University of California Press.
£15.
0 520 03071 0

BRUCE LINCOLN
Emerging from the Chrysalis
Studies in Rituals of Women's Initiation
132pp. Harvard University Press.
£12.25.
0 674 24840 6

Fieldwork has been described as the anthropologist's initiation ritual. There is some truth in this but equally it is true that, like many such rituals, fieldwork involves the acquisition of a certain knowledge and skills. These include ethnography, and thus learning to avoid the pitfalls of the three authors of these books appears to have had any anthropological training; one is a psychologist, one a sociologist, and one a historian of religion. The aims of both books are similar: to reveal through the examination of ethnographic material what ritual (or, as the authors prefer, "ritual") is about; but the methods they employ are different.

The Paige attempt to explain ritual, as reproduction by the method of cross-cultural comparison phenomena and then, bringing to bear a battery of statistical tests in order to produce meaningful correlations between them. The hypothesis in this case, is that rituals of reproduction are "political tactics" used to solve social dilemmas that become crucial at certain points in the human reproductive cycle. In other words, these rituals are concerned with control over fertility and claims to paternity. This idea applies to "stateless" societies only, for in complex societies such matters are settled by the central authority.

unity deserving study as such; another, which appears to represent a different mood, and is an echo of a statement made by Evans-Pritchard, is "that social anthropology is not, and should not aim to be, a 'science' in the natural science sense. If anything, it is a form of art." This is because anthropologists have failed to find any general laws other than self-evident ones, and because their skill lies in the sensitive "translation" of cultures.

However, since neither the notion of science nor that of translation is carefully examined, in spite of the fact that both have occasioned, I find myself both at a loss to know what each means, apart from the fact that other parts of the book, such as a chapter on "Debt Relationship, Power" seem to involve an attempt to discover general laws, and cannot possibly be seen as examples of "translation" between cultures.

Another equally emphatically stated idea ("at rock bottom, that is what my kind of anthropology is all about") is given in the form of a diagram which looks like an inverted T, but is, to me, even less clear. It seems to be a restatement of the familiar view that all human representations take the form of antithetical binary oppositions, and that anything which falls between these opposites is either dangerous or holy. This, too, seems a pretty strong statement for somebody who anthropology. In any case none of these "fundamental" ideas is followed through systematically. Leach attempts to tell us what he believes in, but gives the impression rather that he is not quite sure what that is. As a result, after the initial trumpet calls, he simply drifts into a scanty

disguised nostalgia for the dogmas to which he was once converted.

The main body of the book is composed of bits and pieces loosely connected, loosely documented and loosely argued, but occasionally revealing flashes of the author's fundamental brilliance. This is unfortunate because, in spite of Leach's intentions, the nature of the book means that it will be bought and read by many people who genuinely want to know about social anthropology, and who most probably will be left with a feeling that the subject is incoherent, tortuous and cliché-ridden. Much of the text will be obscure in spite of its colloquial style, and some parts, like the rapid survey of the various notions of humanity held in the history of thought, will appear superficial. Perhaps most disturbing of all will be the out-of-hand dismissal of theories which appear as reasonable to the general reader. Thus we are told, "Do not believe what is implied about these matters [the relevance of anthropology for prehistory] in the pages of the *American Anthropologist*" and *Current Anthropology*; or "explanations" are of "stagnant incompetence". In these cases I believe Leach is right, but I wonder who will be convinced by such rapid denunciation.

Equally worrying is the fact that the argument is often self-contradictory. For example, on page 154 we are told, rather oddly, that "most of the trading arrangements which are encountered in modern industrial societies" follow the pattern of what Lévi-Strauss has called "generalized exchange", which is characterized, as Leach stresses, by permanent affinity; but on page 169

other modes of descent. The protracted discussions that have taken place about the variable nature of patrilineality, and what constitutes patrilineal descent, are ignored.

As well as general problems the book raises particular ones of its own. Their investigation includes puberty rites, but for males this is taken to mean circumcision. The authors' case for defining male puberty rites so narrowly is that circumcision alone involves "a functionally important and emotionally charged organ". This fits with their extraordinary claim that a man's most valuable political asset is his son's penis, but it does not explain why, although the question is discussed, subincision and other rites are being ignored. Nor is it an adequate excuse for leaving out of account male puberty rites involving other organs and segregation. The correlations might have looked rather different if they had been included in the computations.

The book is not limited to cross-cultural correlations but also claims to be based on detailed case studies of individual societies. The authors' use of these, however, gives further grounds for disquiet, as my checking of a few cases revealed. Two examples will do. From an ethnography of the Warrau Indians of the Orinoco Delta they take an account of a first menstruation rite, and conclude that "this ritual exchange allows the father to determine the success of prior displays and rituals in garnering community support for his efforts to protect his daughter's fertility long enough to contract a legal marriage. At no point in the original account is this claim made; it is the authors' own unsupported assumption as to what the ritual is about.

The second case concerns the misreadings of Colin Turnbull's clear account of these people. The Paige have failed to appreciate that it was not the Pygmies who were poor but the way in which a ritual was conducted by the neighbouring Baka villagers.

The focus of Bruce Lincoln's book is narrower. He concentrates on female initiation rites and rests his

we are told that the use of money characterizes relationships which are inherently impermanent. Words of ill, in several places what is confidently stated is either misleading or wrong. Leach seems to suggest that the only significant influence on American cultural anthropology has been Tyler, completely forgetting that equally if not more important are German predecessors of this originally US that the theory of the "key role" which irrigation agriculture is supposed to have played in the emergence of unchanging agrarian "despotisms", is disproved by the fact that "the earliest large-scale irrigation system so far discovered by the archaeologists has turned up in Highland New Guinea". In fact the system referred to is one of drainage, not irrigation, and is not in any way "large-scale" when compared to the systems to which Wittfogel's theory has applied.

Leach refers again and again to Marxism in the book, but rarely with any precision. He tells us, for instance, that Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, was "a kind of rewrite, in précis, of Morgan's *Ancient Society*", which is true only of a part of that book.

A large list of such errors would be tedious, but this is a disorganised and in some parts incoherent book. It does not give any clear idea of what social anthropologists do, and in the end it does not even tell us what Leach's own "credo" is. This is sad, as there is a great need for a good guide to social anthropology by someone who, like Leach, understands the developments that have taken place since the demise of orthodoxy.

The confessor's counsel

By H. G. Koenigsberger

ROBERT BIRELEY:
Religion and Politics in the Age of the Counter-Reformation
Emperor Ferdinand II, William Lamormaini, S. J., and the Formation of Imperial Policy
311pp. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. £19.60.
0 8018 1470 9

Of all the leading personalities of the Thirty Years' War the emperor Ferdinand II is the least known. His career was dramatic. His setbacks were clear-cut and incisive. He crushed the Bohemian revolt. His armies ranged north to the tip of Ireland and south beyond the Po. He joined a religious settlement on the Protestant advance. He dismissed his victorious general, Wallenstein, was forced to recall him and, when Wal-

enstein had saved him, he arranged for his assassination. Finally he concluded an advantageous peace with most of his German adversaries but failed to end the war. Yet Ferdinand's ultimate aims have remained obscure and the decision-making processes of his government in Vienna later historians. He seems always to have acted with the advice of his Privy Council. But none of his ministers was ever sure to get his way nor to make political decisions in the way Richelieu, Olivares, Oxenstierna and even Buckingham were able to relieve their royal masters.

And yet, the emperor himself lacked a dominating or forceful royal personality. He was no Gustavus Adolphus, nor Charles I, and he appears pale even when compared with his Wittelsbach cousin and uneasy ally, Maximilian of Bavaria. Only one aspect of his character has always clearly stood out, his intense and unwavering religious convictions. But how were these convictions to be

translated into political action and how important were they in the balancing of political options in the process of policy formation and decision taking? It was here that the rôle of the emperor's confessor became crucial. From 1624 until Ferdinand's death in 1637 this rôle was filled by the Luxembourg Jesuit, William Lamormaini.

A study of Lamormaini by an experienced Thirty Years' War historian and a fellow-member of the Society of Jesus is therefore very welcome, and it has turned out to be a very important book.

The task, however, has not been easy. Lamormaini was not one of the more flamboyant members of his Order. He was not a profound religious thinker nor, by Jesuit standards, an outstanding scholar. His epistolary and literary styles were pedestrian. Unsurprisingly, Robert Bireley has not succeeded in bringing the man's reticent personality fully to life. But there can be no question of the confessor's intelligence and of his devotion to the Catholic cause and to Austria. These were the qualities which, no doubt, recommended him to Ferdinand.

The problem for the historian, as it was also the problem for Ferdinand's contemporaries, was to know, or to guess, what exactly passed between the emperor and his confessor either during formal confession or in private conversations. It is this which Professor Bireley has attempted to reconstruct from Lamormaini's own correspondence and from that of the ministers and the diplomatic representatives of the pope and the Catholic powers at the Court of Vienna.

Lamormaini was clearly a "hard-liner". When it was a question of negotiating with the Protestants in

sounds all too familiar. His additional complaint about the quality of the wine might today depend rather more on which college you are at.

Dr Phillips's book has to stand comparison with another excellent life of Erasmus of about the same length, Huizinga's; and it is this that leads me to my one criticism. Dr Phillips is a little too kind to Erasmus, and in being so falls to highlight sufficiently some of the problems that a study of Erasmus inevitably raises. What seems lacking from her book is the brilliant intertwining of character and thought which the three central chapters of Huizinga's book provide. And what emerges from those chapters is a more critical view of Erasmus: his modesty may have been false, or at any rate merely protective; his love of simplicity and cleanliness neurotic; his deep reluctance to commit himself to party or place, mere cowardice. To put it so briefly, to parody Huizinga; but his book does raise such questions. Dr Phillips's skirts around them, with the result that her Erasmus is a rather less interesting, and perhaps as a result a less sympathetic figure than Huizinga's.

Like Dr Phillips I find it difficult to be critical of Erasmus; but I cannot agree with her when she defends what she calls his "middle way" - that is, his refusal to commit himself fully either for or against Luther. The more I read Erasmus the more radical I find his views, not only about the existing state of the Church, but also about almost every aspect of early sixteenth-century society, for example, his virulent criticism of the generally held attitudes towards warfare. Can one be so critical and yet remain uncommitted? His great friend, Sir Thomas More, thought otherwise. He was as critical of the existing establishment as Erasmus was, but in the end, however reluctantly, decided for the establishment, the Church establishment, the Roman Catholic Church. The decision cost him his life. Erasmus's defence was that he was first and foremost a writer and scholar, responsible to no institution or government, but only to his own talent and beliefs. Who was right, More or Erasmus? The question relates to Dr Phillips's central argument concerning Erasmus's "middle way".

What makes it clear that Erasmus was no "waver", but passionately believed in certain attitudes which had to do with tolerance and kindness and courtesy, and for which the great exemplar was Jesus? Is he right to argue thus, but two worries remain. Firstly, does the "middle way" best describe the position that Erasmus took? Secondly, however it is described, was his position in the circumstances too right one? It is arguable that it was too radical or too idealistic for the word "middle" to be very helpful, and that however passionately he believed it, he was wrong to think that he had taken a middle course.

Erasmus was not only an enormously prolific writer, but also happened to be closely involved in a major episode of European history. Dr Phillips skilfully avoids being overwhelmed by either of these things, brief though her account of them is. I doubt whether any biographer could have given a better account. In so short a space of the relationship between Erasmus and Luther, and their differing attitudes towards reform of the Catholic Church - one of the most important and most difficult topics in any life of Erasmus.

Another example of successful compression is her presentation of Erasmus in *Praise of Folly*, perhaps, today at any rate, his most often read book. Because much of the satire contained in it is readily accessible especially to those who have a Roman Catholic Church, it is easy to forget that there are "difficulties" in it. Dr Phillips guides us through them with great skill. Particularly enjoyable, also, is her account of Erasmus's two-and-a-half years at Cambridge, where he converted himself to be overworked and underpaid. The complaint

that Erasmus was not only an enormously prolific writer, but also happened to be closely involved in a major episode of European history. Dr Phillips skilfully avoids being overwhelmed by either of these things, brief though her account of them is. I doubt whether any biographer could have given a better account. In so short a space of the relationship between Erasmus and Luther, and their differing attitudes towards reform of the Catholic Church - one of the most important and most difficult topics in any life of Erasmus.

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the Empire or of maintaining Imperial claims in the face of military disaster, the confessor consistently urged the need to maintain God's cause and to rely on His help, even in the face of disaster: for had not God helped Ferdinand against the Bohemian heretics and rebels in 1620, when all had seemed lost? But politics were not always so simple. Ferdinand had to weigh the different political and even religious needs of his hereditary lands and of his imperial position, of his allies and potential allies. None of these were unambiguous. The emperor was often given contradictory advice, and he did not always follow that of his confessor. Bireley traces these different and changing influences with an enviable mastery of the sources and with admirable fairness to the different personalities, including the Protestants. Lamormaini was opposed, even attacked, by other ecclesiastics, including members of his own order, and Bireley does not suggest that the emperor's confessor was always right nor that his was necessarily always the decisive influence in the formation of imperial policy. Bireley's coolness towards positively chilling in his rather off-hand account of the secret condemnation and subsequent murder of Wallenstein with the Jesuits of Vienna and Rome praying for a favourable outcome of the event.

At times the author's appreciation of events seems too narrowly focused. I wonder, for instance, whether he has appreciated just how great a fiasco the electoral convention of Regensburg in 1630 was for the house of Austria? The emperor's armies had just won several major campaigns, against Denmark and against France. Ferdinand therefore started his negotiations with the electors from a classic position of strength such as politicians always claim they need to get the diplomatic

results they want. Yet he was manoeuvred into dismissing Wallenstein and placing his army under the command of the Bavarian General, Tilly; he failed to have the election of his son as king of the Romans so much as considered by the electors; he got no help for the Spanish Habsburgs war against the Dutch; he accepted practically all French pre-war demands for the succession of Mantua and he failed to stop Maximilian's negotiations with Richelieu for a Franco-Bavarian alliance. This chapter Bireley has called "Lamormaini's triumph".

Lamormaini consistently misunderstood Richelieu's policy and, at least partially, misinterpreted that of the pope. The Catholic religion, it seemed to him, should and would in the end override all other motivations. Ferdinand pursued a policy of restoring the Empire to its religious condition at the time of the Peace of Augsburg. To this end he issued the Edict of Restitution, i.e. the restoration of the bishoprics and other church property which the Protestants were held to have usurped since 1555. To obtain support for this policy he gave way to the electors at Regensburg. "The issue of the Edict", Bireley writes, "reveals most clearly the ideological nature of the German war." It would be more true to say, I think, that it reveals the ideological element in this war. But it also reveals that this element was not interpreted in the same way by the different Catholic actors and that it was not the dominant element. By the time of the Peace of Prague, 1635, it had ceased to be that even for the emperor Ferdinand. We are still left with the question why religion was of such varying importance in the different courts of Europe during the Thirty Years' War and why even in Vienna, the court in which, outside Rome, its influence was greatest, it was so inconsistent.

The book contains chapters on the community and its buildings - fragments of which survive from this age; on its relations with the counts of Anjou and Vendôme and lesser layfolk; on its rivalry with other local abbots; and on surviving traces of its artistic and literary activity. All this is attractively and perceptively presented, and it makes an extremely worthwhile and interesting contribution, especially on the interaction of patronage and politics.

There are some minor flaws - two plans of the abbey are offered without adequate explanation either of their details or their discrepancies; and the plates do not have their numbers on them. There is one obvious gap. The whole story is based on annals and charters of exceptional interest, which form outstandingly the most interesting element in the monks' literary activity, but we are told too little about such sources, and about their transmission; even the appendix on the abbey's forgeries (though carefully done) is relatively superficial on the ecology of twelfth-century forgery and slight in its reference to the wider literature on the subject. This is a pity, since interpretation of difficult material lies at the root of the book as a whole; this interpretation is carefully thought out, and the lack of explanation does not seem to vitiate the soundness of the analysis.

This final impression of the book is that a great deal of first-hand historical and skilled research has been presented with a light touch and a clear and penetrating insight.

from his letters. The abbey of Vendôme lived surrounded by some of the most rapacious feudal warriors of their day, and the abbey would scarcely have survived if the abbots had not been strong, persistent men; none the less Abbot Geoffroy seems to have been a sterling combination of pride, force and chicanery; and he sustained ceaseless litigation with rival abbots and secular neighbours. Monastic pride is hardly a quality which would have appealed to St Benedict, but it is very familiar to students of the twelfth century alongside much more amiable attributes - and Geoffroy's activities are extremely reminiscent of those of Abbot Pons of Vézelay in the next generation, immortalized in the Vézelay chronicle.

Yet prayer there must have been at Vendôme, as well as power; and the abbey was clearly held in high regard in the eleventh century as a centre of observance: its survival and the spread of its possessions and dependencies, far and wide, testify as much. Its origin lay in a very characteristic mixture of piety and politics. The formidable Geoffroy Martel, the conqueror of the Saracens and the Count of Anjou, recently founded by his father into the county of Vendôme, married Agnes, formerly countess of Poitou and duchess of Aquitaine, in 1032. In the years which followed the young couple meditated on their slender claims to Vendôme end, no doubt, on their even more slender chances of reaching Heaven, and struck a mighty blow for both by founding a large, richly endowed abbey which should concentrate the best religious aspirations, and the most effective prayers, of the region.

Later they left Vendôme to pursue their vigorous and ambitious careers in a wider sphere - he as count of Anjou and creator of a great feudal empire; she to return to her former home so as to help her Polvein sons in their political schemes, and to place sufficient distance between herself and her violent husband. But she never forgot her Abbey; nor did he. When in difficulties he "helped himself to its property". None the less

Abbots and Angevins

By C. N. L. Brooke

PENELOPE D. JOHNSON:
Prayer, Patronage and Power
The Abbey of la Trinité, Vendôme, 1032-1187
213pp. New York University Press.
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Even the great abbey of Vendôme in its heyday may seem at first sight a relatively esoteric theme. But Penelope D. Johnson, in an attractive, learned and lively book, has shown how in numerous ways its history and its abbots reflected and illuminated the religious and secular movements of the age. In this she is aided by a collection of charters and annals full of vivid detail, describing the generous gifts and depredations of Vendôme's lively and erratic secular lords, and their picturesque penances, culminating at the end of the eleventh century in the humiliation of Count Geoffroy of Vendôme, who "had to come bound and prostrate into the chapter house and prostrate himself before the altar, at the abbot's feet, where he swore to renounce all claims against La Trinité and never again to do it harm. He then placed four deniers on his head and a kull on the altar", as "symbols of penance and servility". His death in Jerusalem soon after saved him from the necessity of breaking his oath.

The sources indeed tell us much more about patronage and power than about prayer. We can sense that the second abbot Odoic (1045-82) was both a man of prayer and a force in the ecclesiastical world: he won the admiration of the papal curia and was made a cardinal in the 1060s, one of those rare, distant monastic cardinals who figured briefly in the dreams of Hildebrand and his colleagues. Even more clearly the fifth abbot, Geoffroy (1093-1132), was a powerful, overbearing, unattractive character; and he is the best-known of all the abbots to us

